

# Kabul

د افغانستان د کابل ښار  
د اسلامي دین لودین کتابتون  
کتاب پر لاسي شمېره





کابل از نگاه میرزا محمد علی صائب تهرانی موفای ۱۲۰۸ هـ ق

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چو آتش که میریزد از نوک منقار

که طوبی خشک بر جامانده است از شرک اشجارش

بسم الله الرحمن الرحیم  
 در هر خطه که است بر منو کاج مهر از آن خدیو راهبر



# *An Historical Guide to* **Kabul**

by

Nancy Hatch Dupree

*in collaboration with*

AHMAD ALI KOHZAD



**Second Edition**

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<i>Introduction to the Second Edition</i>	<i>III</i>
<i>Introduction</i>	<i>IV</i>
 The Name	 1
 The Story of Kabul	 5
 The Tours	 63
 Tour I To Babur's Gardens and the Kabul Museum	 65
<i>Amir Abdur Rahman's Mausoleum; Afghan Tourist Organization; Shah-do-Shamshira Mosque; Babur's Gardens; Darulaman; Kabul Museum; Rishkhor and Gulbagh; Timur Shah's Mausoleum</i>	
 Tour II Bala Hissar to Shohada-i-Salehin and Tepe Maranjan	 93
<i>Pul-i-Khishti Mosque; Bala Hissar; Shohada-i-Salehin; Chaman-i-Hozuri; Tepe Maranjan; Bazaars</i>	
 Tour III Shahr-i-Nau to the Kabul University via Bagh-i-Bala	 123



*Foreign Ministry; Masjid-i-Sherpur; Kolola Pushta;  
Bagh-i-Bala; Kabul University*

Tour IV To the Airport	143
<i>Royal (Arg) Palace; Cantonment Sites 1841, 1879; Bemaru Heights</i>	
Tour V Some Holy Shrines	151
<i>Ziarat -i- Ashukhan-o-Arefan; Cheshme Roshnayi; Ziarat-i-Khwaja Safa; Ziarat-i-Pir-i-Akram Khan</i>	
Restaurants and Evening Entertainment	159
Some Afghan Dishes	163
Shopping in Kabul	165
Eight Short Trips Outside Kabul	167
<i>Paghman and Kargha Lake; Istalif and the Koh Daman; the Salang Pass and Khinjan; Gulbahar and Kapisa; Tangi Gharu and the Lataband Pass; Guldara and Shewaki Buddhist Stupas; Ghazni; Hadda Site Museum</i>	
Selected Bibliography	229
Location Guide	235



## INTRODUCTION TO THE 2ND EDITION

Cities like Kabul change a little every day. Those who live in them note these changes in a perfunctory sort of way, bemoaning the disappearance of one landmark and lauding the appearance of another. It was a revealing exercise, therefore, to note the major changes of the past six years for this revised edition. Others are due; some are already in progress. Perhaps the most significant change is not noted, however, and that is the increase in foreign faces. They come from every corner of the world and their presence recalls earlier centuries when Afghanistan was a busy crossroads. We wish these visitors an enjoyable sojourn in Afghanistan and hope this guide will add to their pleasant memories of the city of Kabul.

It seems to be my lot to leave Kabul just as these manuscripts go to press, leaving a myriad of chores concerning final details to others. This time John Tobais fills this role and I acknowledge his assistance with great pleasure and deep appreciation.

*Nancy Hatch Dupree*

Kabul

6 June, 1971

## INTRODUCTION

THE HISTORY of Kabul is a long and eventful story, some of it but hazily recorded, some of it recorded in minutest detail. I have tried to marshal these historical facts to serve the needs of two quite different groups: the casual tourist and the resident of Kabul interested in a broader knowledge of local sites and historical events.

Generally speaking, the introductory history section relates the history of the city to the events of successive periods of Afghan history. The tours relate the details of that history to specific sites in and around the city. It has been impossible, however, to include everything and I urge those interested to take advantage of Kabul's very good libraries.

This has been a frustrating time to attempt a guide to Kabul. Many are the paragraphs that have been written only to be deleted because of the sudden disappearance of the subject. The city's President of Construction, Esmatollah Enayat Seraj, has been most helpful in apprising me of expected developments but should you find yourself directed by the text to note a non-existent object, please know that change



is rampant in Kabul today.

It is difficult adequately to thank all who have had a part in this Guide. The Afghan is justly proud of his history and generous in discussing it. May I therefore start by thanking all my Afghan friends who have so graciously borne a veritable barrage of questioning and carried out numerous special tasks.

To my collaborator, Ahmad Ali Kohzad, I owe a special debt. It has been a stimulating experience to work again with one known as Afghanistan's foremost historians. He has shared with me his vast fund of knowledge and his intimate appreciation of the city without which I would have been at a considerable loss. The hours spent with Mr. Kohzad on the hillsides and in the winding alleys of Kabul will remain with me among my most pleasant memories.

Mr. Abdul Wahab Tarzi, President of the Afghan Tourist Organization, has continued to offer encouragement throughout and his own considerable interest in history has been of much value. I must also add acknowledgement of gratitude to Robert Alston, Oriental Secretary at the British Embassy, who read parts of the manuscript and tested the tours. His constructive comments were greatly appreciated. Dr. Scerrato and the members of the Italian Archeological Mission were most generous with their time in allowing me to study their sites and in checking the section on Ghazni. My sincere thanks also to

M. Le Berre and my other friends at the Delegation Archeologique Francaise en Afghanistan who were again of great assistance in giving of their personal knowledge and in sharing the rich resources of DAFA. Their patient, if at times amused, interest was invaluable.

The assistance of others is readily visible. The cover showing the Bala Hissar as it was in 1831 is taken from a sketch by Charles Masson, one of the west's earliest and most articulate visitors to the city. The sketch was photographed for the Guide by Erik Hansen, Unesco's advisor to the Government of Afghanistan on the restoration of historical monuments. He was also kind enough to photograph for me the sketches of the Shah Jahan mosque and Babur's tomb and to allow me to use his photographs of the Buddhist monuments discussed in the text.

The frontispiece is a selection of couplets from a 17th century poem entitled "Kabul" by Sa'ib-i-Tabrizi copied especially for the Guide by the noted Afghan calligrapher Ibrahim Khalil. When visiting the Ziarat-i-Tamim beyond the Bala Hissar you may see yet another example of Mr. Khalil's artistry in the dedicatory inscription to the right of the door.

Sa'ib-i-Tabrizi was a Persian poet of fame who was called to the court of the Moghuls in India. On returning he penned this ode to Kabul, a city well beloved by the Moghul emperors. Though every Kabuli



delights in quoting passages from it today, it was only through the kindness of Ahmad Javaid, Professor of Literature with the Compilation Department of the Ministry of Education, that I was successful in obtaining a text of the original. Professor Javaid was also most generous in sharing his collection of Afghan legends.

The translator insists on anonymity but I can not refrain from acknowledging my deep appreciation for his most important contribution to the Guide.

## KABUL

*Oh, the beautiful city of Kabul wears a rugged mountain  
Skirt,  
And the rose is jealous of its lash-like thorns.*

*The dust of Kabul's blowing soil smarts lightly in my  
eyes,  
But I love her, for knowledge and love both come from  
her dust.*

*I sing bright praises to her colourful tulips,  
The beauty of her trees makes me blush.*

*How sparkling the water flows from Pul-i-Mastān!  
May Allah protect such beauty from the evil eye of man!*

*Khizr chose Kabul to Paradise,  
For her mountains brought him near to heaven's delights.*

*The fort's dragon-sprawling walls guard the city well,  
Each brick is more precious than the treasure of  
Shayagan.*

*Every street in Kabul fascinates the eye.  
In the bazaars, Egypt's caravans pass by.*

*No one can count the beauteous moons on her rooftops,  
And hundreds of lovely suns hide behind her walls.*

*Her morning's laugh is as gay as flowers,  
Her dark nights shine like beautiful hair.*

*Her tuneful nightingales sing with flame in their notes,  
Fiery songs like burning leaves, fall from their throats.*

*I sing to the gardens, Jahanara and Shahrara.  
Even the Tuba of Paradise is jealous of their greenery.*

A fuller understanding of certain references and various subtleties of the imagery heightens one's appreciation of the tribute being paid the city. In couplet one the poet uses an image favoured by many Persian poets in which the eyelashes of a beautiful girl are said to pierce the heart of her lover as through they were thorns. Couplet two uses a play on words refer-



ring to Ashukhan (Lover) and Arefan (Spiritually Enlightened), Kabul's patron saints, whose shrine is discussed in Tour II.

The tulips of the Koh Daman mentioned in couplet three have long been the object of admiration. The Emperor Batur, for instance, was so captivated by them that he writes in his memoirs: "In the skirts of the mountains the ground is richly diversified by various kinds of tulips. I once directed them to be counted, and they brought in thirty-two or thirty-three different sorts of tulips." In the second line of this couplet the poet refers to the Arghawan or Red-bud which imparts a blush to the mountains in the spring.

The Pul-i-Mastan of couplet four still stands outside the main entrance to the Bala Hissar, altered into an insignificance which would hardly inspire a poet of today the fifth couplet, however, refers to the shrine at Cheshme Khedr discussed in Tour II. which still pays an important part in the lives of the city's citizens.

The poet's image of the ancient walls as a protective dragon in couplet six is interesting when it is realized that throughout Buddhist mythology the snake is considered as the guardian of treasure. Shayagan is used throughout Islamic literature to signify a treasure of immense magnitude and is akin to the Greek Croesus.

Couplet eight pays tribute to the celebrated beauty

of the ladies of Kabul, an unchanging quality which holds true today. The same may be said of the next couplet's tribute to Kabul's weather made all the more glorious when contrasted to that of the plains of India. The gardens of Jahanara and Shahrara were gardens laid out during the time of the Emperor Babur as discussed on page 74. The Tuba is a tree of great beauty in Paradise.

On the title page you will find a small emblem taken from the first copper coins issued at Kabul by Timur Shah Sadozai after he transferred the capital of Afghanistan from Qandahar to Kabul. Again we find the tulip, this time symbolizing the city as a flower protected by the royal swords. The coin was found after a long and what seemed to be a doomed search, at Istalif. It is a pleasure to acknowledge my indebtedness to the dean of Afghanistan's artists, Ghafur Brechna, for preparing the sketch for the Guide.

Most of the photographs were taken especially for the Guide by friends who have been very generous with their time and talents. The size of the book and efforts to include as many pictures as possible have made it inadvisable to give individual credits with each picture as I would have liked to have done. I wish to thank them for their assistance and for adding to the completeness and attractiveness of the Guide. A. Samad Asefi, Chief of the Photographic Section of the Ministry of Press and Information; Jimmy



Bedford, Fulbright; Paul Conklin, Peace Corps, for his view of Istalif from the Takht; Louis Dupree, American Universities Field Staff; Erik Hansen, Unesco; H. E. Klappert USIS; Robert MacMakin, Franklin Book Programs; the Kabul Museum, Alan Wolfe, American Embassy.

It was suggested that the Guide be printed outside Afghanistan. The results of the decision to print it in Kabul are most gratifying. For this I am indebted to Robert MacMakin, Consultant on Printing Management for Franklin Book Programs, who took a personal interest in all phases of the Guide's production. Towards the end of a project of this sort come the tasks of proof-reading and other final details with which it was my good fortune to receive the expert assistance of Annie Dupree. I owe her for more than these labours, for her understanding of and sympathy for the city has been a constant guide since my arrival.

It is my sincere hope that this Guide will add to the visitor's enjoyment of this historic city. This is my attempt to repay Kabul for the happy years I have spent here.

*Nancy Hatch Dupree*

*Paghman, August 1964*





*n Historical Guide to Kal*





## THE NAME

THE RIGVEDA and the Avesta speak of the Kubha River c. 3000 B.C. and Ptolemy, writing c. 150 A.D., speaks of Kabura, the capital of the Kabolitae on the Kophen River. Still later, Pahlevi texts of the late Sassanian period refer to the city as Kapul. From these and other references, scholars have written learned dissertations.

In the absence of historical certainty, however, legend has been busy creating some delightfully charming tales concerning the origins of this name Kabul.

Sir Alexander Burnes tells us, for instance, that when he was in Kabul in 1834, it was popularly believed that two sons of Noah, Cakool and Habool, were the founders of the Afghan race. When it came to naming their greatest city the two brothers quarreled bitterly until at last a compromise was reached: each would give to the city one syllable of his name. Thus it was that the city came to be called Ca-bool. Legend has taken considerable license here. In Persian, Adam's two sons, Cain and Abel, are known as Cabil and Habil. The Moghul Emperor Babur tells us that Cain was the founder of Kabul and that he

visited his tomb soon after his arrival. It was situated, he said, in the gardens south of Bala Hissar in the area now known as Shohada -i- Salehin.

Again it is said that in the distant beginnings of time, the valley of Kabul was a large lake in the center of which lay a beautiful island where a musician led a carefree life devoted to music and dancing. Hearing of this idyllic state, a great king came to the valley only to find upon arrival that deep waters around the island made passage impossible. Determined, he gave orders for great quantities of straw (*kah*) to be brought from surrounding villages and more distant provinces. With this a long bridge (*pul*) was built. The king found the valley so delightful that he subsequently built a city there, naming it after that first Bridge of Straw, Ka-pul. Advocates of this theory point for support to the marshes of Kalah-i-Ashmat-Khan and Chaman-i-Wazirabad and to the heights of Bemaru and Siah Sang.

The briefest version refers to Kabul's fame as a commercial center by pointing out that the bazaars are so temptingly filled that one can spend money (*pul*) in Kabul as though it was only straw (*kah*).

A poetic reading of the name was composed by Mahmud Tarzi in a couplet which pays tribute to this city nestled within the mountains. In Persian, Kabul is written with the letters کابل *KABL*. The *K* with slight modification may become *G* which together



with the final *L* forms گل *gul*, the word for rose. The intermediate آب *AB*, means water. Thus it may be written:

گر نام دیار من بپرسی      آبیست میان گل چکیده

*If you ask me the name of my abode;*

*It is a drop of water within a rose.*



## THE STORY OF KABUL

THE PAGES of history are studded with its name but the personal story of Kabul lies embedded by the inundations of dramatic events sweeping over it. Revealed, there emerges a highly individual story in keeping with the character of its citizenry.

### *Aryans*

Time and conjecture blur our view of the earliest known participants, the Aryans, who, c. 3000 B.C., travelled south from beyond the River Oxus, not as an army but in family groups, to cross the Hindu Kush on their way into Northern India. They wrote no travelogues of their journey but as they moved they sang hymns about what impressed them. As part of their religious rites, these hymns were passed on by word of mouth from one generation of priests to another until c. 1200 B.C. when they were written down in a collection known as the Rigveda. Here we may read of the Kubha, or the Kabul River, and picture, if but hazily, the passage of this intrepid band.

### *Achaemenids*

The mists of ignorance close in after their passing, lifting c. 520 B.C. to reveal conquering armies from



Achaemenid Persia. The Achaemenid King, Darius, builder of the famous palaces of Susa and Persepolis, caused the following to be inscribed on his tombstone: "By favour of Ahuramazda these are the countries which I seized outside of Persia; I ruled over them; what was said to them by me, that they did; my law that held them firm....." There follows a list of twenty-nine countries among which the Kabul Valley is listed.

The annexation of India by the Achaemenids was a highly profitable venture, if Herodotus is correct, for he reports that tribute from India (i.e. the Punjab and Sind) came to over a million pounds sterling in gold dust. To facilitate trade, an imperial highway passed through the upper valley of Kabul where local officials ruled with Persian counterparts, thus obviating revolt without eliminating provincial independence. Though traffic along this highway must have been brisk, a few coins found at the foot of Tepe Maranjan in the center of Kabul form our only surviving evidence of this prosperous trade and of the Achaemenid presence.

### *Alexander of Macedonia*

Considerable time elapses before it is possible to resume this story in the summer of 329 B.C., in Qandahar, at the encampment of Alexander the Macedonian. His swift passage across Persia had

left Achaemenid power crushed and he now stood poised, the fate of the eastern provinces at his command. It was early winter before the direction of his next march was made known. Defying seemingly insurmountable obstacles, mysteriously provisioning man and beast in a barren land, undaunted by the incredible hardships of snow-blocked passes, he pushed his intrepid band northward past Ghazni and descended upon the Kabul Valley. Here, at the southern base of the Hindu Kush, perhaps at Jebal Seraj, he encamped and ordered the building of a new city, to be known as Alexandria-ad-Caucasum.

With Alexander were historians and diary-writers whose accounts, though unfortunately lost in the original, are preserved in the works of later Greek writers. Though these later writers looked askance at the veracity of their predecessors, who they only grudgingly admit sometimes "stammer out a few words of truth", they did nonetheless condense much of the earlier works into their own accounts. Thus our knowledge of this period is remarkably detailed.

This being so, it is disappointing not to find details about a city of Kabul. It must be remembered, however, that Alexander was marching without benefit of maps. Under such circumstances he necessarily looked upon mountain ranges and rivers as his guides. If we study these in relation to Kabul we quickly see that on arriving from Ghazni the army would have

passed by the foot of Paghman and Istalif on its way to the Charikar area. Kabul, being shielded behind two low ranges, would not have been on the direct line of march.

Both Strabo and Pliny refer to a town called Ortospana which Ptolemy, writing c. 150 A.D., is the first to identify with "Kabura on the Kophen River, the capital of the Kabolitae". Other contemporary reports also verify the fact that at this time the region of the Kabul Valley was controlled by a number of totally independent tribes, each with its own autonomous chieftain. It seems reasonable to assume that such a tribe was ruling at Kabul but that the small settlement was scarcely worth a detour by Alexander's army.

The decision to settle at Alexandria-ad-Caucasum was a natural one. There three important caravan routes met. From the west caravans came via Balkh and the Ghorband Valley to meet those arriving from China via Turkestan and the Panjshir Valley. From India the caravans came via the Kabul River to Sarobi and thence via the Panjshir River, or, via Ghazni after leaving the major east-west route from Persia to India at Qandahar. Both Alexander and Darius before him, in their attempts to establish unified empires, including the territories of Persia, India, and Bactria, considered this spot of the most vital strategic significance.



Questions of strategy little concerned the ordinary Macedonian soldiers but we read that this mountain-ringed valley with its numerous vineyards appealed especially to them. Here they were reminded of their own homeland and identified it with that land which their ancient myths recorded as having been conquered by the god Dionysus. At the head of a wandering band of vine-garlanded revellers, playing drums and cymbals, so says the myth, "Dionysus conquered, founded cities, and gave laws to these cities and introduced the use of wine...."

Alexander, though wine finally proved his nemesis, had more than wine on his mind that winter. As soon as the snows in the passes thawed, he set out via the Panjshir Valley, in pursuit of the last Achaemenid King, Darius III, who had taken refuge in Bactria with Bessus, its governor. Bessus subsequently killed Darius and proclaimed himself king. Exactly one year after leaving the Kabul Valley, having vanquished Bessus and conquered Bactria, Alexander returned to Alexandria-ad-Caucasum with 3,500 horses and 10,000 foot soldiers. Alexandria-ad-Caucasum and Kabul he formed into the separate satrapy of Parapamisidae, which he placed in the care of a Persian governor named Turiaspes. Affairs thus settled, Alexander and his army once again set forth, this time for the invasion of India.

Sturdy Greek peasant foot-soldiers wearing broad-

brimmed hats, top boots, and cloaks thrown over shirts of mail, some carrying long heavy spears, others slings, javelins, or large bows, marched side by side with contingents from the recently acquired territories of Egypt, Persia and Central Asia. Prancing with them were the much admired horses from north of the Hindu Kush, whose riders, we read, struck terror into the hearts of their enemies. They followed the Panjshir River to its junction with the Kabul River, but before reaching Jalalabad they stopped to await the arrival of the King of Taxila and other lesser chieftains who had been summoned to the Kabul Valley by Alexander.

We can picture this encampment of oddly assorted soldiers, the royal tent in the center closely encircled by those of his "Companions," cavalrymen drawn from Macedonia's elite aristocracy. Somewhere among these elite were three men destined to be his successors: Ptolemy, future king of Egypt; Lysimachus, inheritor of the European conquests; Seleucus, prospective ruler of his Asiatic conquests. One by one the summoned rajas came, riding on richly caparisoned elephants and followed by large retinues bearing presents of their countries' most prized products. In this mountain valley one of history's greatest spectacles was thus staged. Alas, the chroniclers of the event did not see fit to identify the valley.

This colourful, bustling picture is our last of Alex-

ander in the vicinity of Kabul. Two years later, however, while at the mouth of the Indus preparing for the homeward journey, his attention was once again called to this valley when word reached him that Governor Turiaspes had been found guilty of extortion. His orders were quick and decisive; Turiaspes was executed and replaced by Oxyartes, father of his newly acquired Bactrian bride, Roxana, Bactria's most celebrated beauty. Forced by his own troops to abandon further conquest, Alexander faced west in October 325 B.C., still dreaming of the glories he believed Greek leadership would stimulate in this fabulous new land. This was not to be: in 323 B.C., death cut short the dream which he alone had envisioned.

### *Seleucids*

Murderous in-fighting now took place among Alexander's followers until the eventual emergence of the three successors mentioned above. In the eastern provinces the news heralded an immediate reassertion of independence and by 322 B.C. Macedonian authority, established only six short years before, had vanished. These kingdoms had submitted in fear at the approach of a great conqueror but his stay had been too short to instill loyalty. Now the garrisons were too weak to escape extermination. Herodotus tells us that the hill tribes of the Kabul Valley were the most war-like, loyal only to their own and fiercely opposed to outside



domination. True to their character, they now reverted to their accustomed system of tribal government. Politically, the passage of Alexander had done little to alter life in the Kabul Valley. Eastward, India also reestablished local rule but in a form significantly different from pre-Alexandrian days. Where before there had been a plethora of petty kingdoms there now rose the strong, unified dynasty of the Maurya.

None of this was acceptable, of course, to Seleucus ( 323-280 B.C. ), ruler of Babylonia and Persia, who regarded all of Alexander's eastern conquests as part of his inheritance. Marching from his capital on the Tigris to reclaim them he succeeded in winning back Bactria but after crossing the Hindu Kush in 305 B.C. he found a formidable Maurya army, composed of 60,000 infantry, 30,000 cavalry, 9,000 elephants and a multitude of chariots, opposing him on the other side of the Indus. What actually happened next is best reported by Strabo. In speaking of the areas between the Hindu Kush and the Indus, he tersely writes: "Alexander took these away from the Aryans and established settlements of his own, but Seleucus Nicator gave them to Sandrocottus (Chandragupta), upon terms of intermarriage and of receiving in exchange 500 elephants." So it would appear that for the price of one princess and 500 elephants, the Kabul Valley passed for the first time under the suzerainty of India.

## *Mauryas*

The Maurya period is one of immense cultural importance, especially under its most renowned ruler Ashoka (269-232 B.C.) whose empire extended from the Arabian Sea to the Bay of Bengal and from the Hindu Kush to Mysore in Central India. Details of its influence in the Kabul Valley, however, are lacking, chiefly from the fact that the new masters of the area held a completely different attitude towards wordly affairs. Whereas the Greeks set down all that they saw in minutest detail with exuberant enthusiasm, the Indian writers recorded thought rather than action, ideas rather than events. Thus momentous happenings are either ignored or at most cryptically referred to.

Ashoka was a great evangelist and issued many edicts regarding his Law of Piety which were inscribed on stone throughout his empire. From these we learn of his attitude toward the border peoples for whom he felt a benevolent responsibility although they did not come under his direct administration and remained as semi-independent satrapies under their own chieftains. Parapamisidae, or Kabul, formed one such satrapy, as did Arachosia, or Qandahar, where a bilingual Greek-Aramaic inscription was found some years ago and another, only in Greek, in February 1964. A similar Greek inscription was also found in Laghman.

It was undoubtedly a time of prosperity for the people of the Kabul Valley situated mid-way between the strong empires of the Seleucids and the Mauryas. Laden with gold, jewels, spices, and cosmetics from India, caravans travelling to the west passed through the Kabul Valley on their way to meet others conveying furs from Central Asia and a novel new item, silk, from China. In their wake came diplomatic missions, for the courts of east and west curried the favour of the intermediate chieftains whose whims controlled their fortunes. This prosperity, however, was contingent upon the maintenance of peace by their large and powerful neighbours. This in turn was dependent upon strong leadership.

By the end of the third century B.C. such leadership was lacking, and those in power were totally unable to command respect for their authority. This brought about chaos to the east and chaos to the west. The intermediate areas consequently fell prey to local, self-styled strong men who grabbed whatever territory they could dominate. In the division of the spoils Kabul fell to the Indian King Subhagasena who ruled from Kapisa, a town to the east of modern Charikar, 36 miles north of Kabul.

### *Bactrians*

Up to this point life in the Kabul Valley had been affected by currents sweeping in either from the west



or from the east. The spotlight now shifts to centre to focus on Bactria. Reserved for royal Achaemenid princes, favoured by Alexander, the wide fertile plains stretching between the northern slopes of the Hindu Kush and the Oxus River had long been a prize satrapy of Persia. The indigenous population included a high proportion of Greeks; descendents of prisoners captured at the time of Achaemenid wars with Greece, exiled Greek miscreants, a few veterans of Alexander's armies, and the more recent colonists sent to strengthen the province against the encroaching nomads. Together they formed a large, long established community which though thoroughly identified both socially and politically with the life of Bactria and essentially anti-Macedonian, were, nevertheless, highly receptive to Hellenic influences. To history they are known as the Greco-Bactrians.

Taking advantage of the waning fortunes of the Macedonian Seleucids, the governor of Bactria, Diodotus, defected in 256 B.C. and when finally one last attempt at unification was made, by the Seleucid Antiochus III, the Bactrians were found to be both strong and fiercely determined to maintain their independence. Instead of conquering them Antiochus III entered into an alliance with his adversaries against their common foe, the nomads of Central Asia. Then, turning south, he crossed the Hindu Kush in 206 B.C. where King Subhagasena was easily persuaded to recognize his su-

zerainty.

Before long Bactria cast about for new lands to conquer. It could not move toward the west for here Parthia, a new kingdom lying southeast of the Caspian Sea, was waxing strong and beyond Parthia was Seleucia with which it had just allied itself. To the east, however, lay India still floundering in discord since the death of Ashoka. This rich prize was a powerful lure.

The move across the Hindu Kush was made c. 185 B.C. by Demetrius I who assumed the title of Aniketos (Victorious) directly upon taking possession of Kapisa. The traditional function of the Hindu Kush as a barrier between north and south was not yet, however, to be defied. Thus while Demetrius was in the south crushing the Mauryas, he lost Bactria to a rival, Eucratides. Heading north to retrieve it, he left his new conquests in the hands of his brother, Antimachus, who was shortly thereafter superseded in the Kabul Valley by two Bactrian brothers, joint kings of Qandahar. To celebrate their victory they struck coins at Kapisa honoring the god Dionysus, the mythical conqueror of Kabul recalled by Alexander's soldiers. They were not long masters of the valley before Eucratides wrested it from them, styling himself Megas (the Great) upon his victory. From this evidence it would seem that the possession of Kapisa and the Kabul Valley was considered of great moment by these Bactrian kings.

## *Indo-Greeks*

Eucratides was a strong and able leader whose promising career was cut short by his son, who murdered him c. 160/155 B.C. plunging the Greco-Bactrian Dynasty into irreparable discord just at the time when outside pressures from the north and from the west were building up against it. Though this spelled disaster for Bactria, time had not run out for the Greek kings south of the Hindu Kush. Nevertheless, the detailed story of these kings, known as the Indo-Greeks, is one of utter confusion. Almost the only source of information is that derived from numismatic evidence and this in itself is subject to many interpretations.

The information now available focuses our attention directly upon Kalasi, Kapisa, where the most illustrious of the Indo-Greek kings, Menander (130-110 B.C.), ruled with celebrated justice as far south as Ghazni and as far east as Taxila. Many thousands of Menander's coins have been found in Kabul itself so we may assume its existence as a prosperous center at this time. Upon Menander's death, civil war resulting in the simultaneous rule of numerous petty kings with grandiose titles, each mutually antagonistic, once again plunged the area into turmoil. But before we can understand the final chapter of Greek rule in the east it is necessary to examine happenings on the periphery of this seething center.

The restless hoard of nomadic tribes in Central Asia

north of the Oxus had always been of concern to the rulers of Persia, who purposely kept Bactria strong as a buffer against their relentless encroachment on the settled areas. During the period of the Greco-Bactrians one such tribe, known as the Saka, inhabited the area in the neighborhood of the Jaxartes River while another tribe, the Yueh-chih, were similarly settled on the Chinese border in the vicinity of Kansu. Just prior to the murder of Eucratides, c. 160 B.C., a rival tribe killed the Yueh-chih chief, made his skull into a wine-cup and unceremoniously deprived his people of their grazing grounds. As a result, 100,000 families were compelled to wander westward with their horses, cattle and sheep. They appeared menacingly before the Saka, who finding Bactria then too strong to invade, moved by various routes into the Seistan area of southern Afghanistan.

The Yueh-chih were content in their new home until suddenly their old enemy the Hsiung Nu again appeared out of the steppe. Forced to seek new pastures, they looked across the Oxus. What they saw is described by early Chinese sources thus: "They (the Bactrians) were sedentary, and had walled cities and houses. They had no great kings or chiefs, but some cities and towns had small chiefs. Their soldiers were weak and feared fighting. They were skillful in trade." This brief but cogent statement pictures leaderless Bactria in decline. Opportunities for conquest, there-



fore, seemed bright and the Yueh-chih crossed the Oxus without opposition c. 128 B.C. and soon after incorporated Bactria into the Yueh-chih nation, then a loose confederation of five clans.

Turning next to the west we must have a look at Parthia. Established about the same time as Greco-Bactria by a nomadic, non-Greek people, it had for some time functioned as a wedge between the Greek dynasties of Seleucia and Bactria, thus weakening the effectiveness of Greek alliances. Furthermore, at the same time that Bactria lost its strong leader, Eucratides, Parthia gained the leadership of its greatest ruler. Exploiting each sign of weakness on the part of the Seleucids, Parthian power grew until by 137 B.C. the empire stretched from Herat to the Tigris River. When the wave of Saka invasion instigated by the Yueh-chih began to pour across its borders, Parthia, unlike tottering Bactria, was able to contain them, thus forcing the nomads to move eastward via Qandahar into the Punjab and Sind where they established kingdoms at the expense of the Indo-Greeks.

As the first century B.C. dawns we are thus presented with a picture of the Indo-Greeks confined to the Kabul - Gardez - Peshawar area and surrounded by restless nomadic kingdoms. In an attempt to withstand the threat of extermination, family feuds were set aside, marriages between contending houses were arranged, and gigantic efforts toward solidarity were

made. Though sometimes successful in their wars against the Saka, these victories were only ephemeral and the ring gradually tightened. When at last Gardez was lost, Greek power was confined to one mountain valley alone. This was Kabul.

### *Kushans*

In Bactria, the Yueh-chih were firmly established: the five clans now united under the banner of one, the Kushans, led by Kujula Kadphises. Unification meant strength, so Kujula Kadphises crossed the Hindu Kush c.48 A.D. and formed an alliance with the last Greek king in Kabul, Hermæus, thus peacefully ending Greek rule. His son Vima Kadphises moved against the Saka in northern India and established an empire which the famous Kushan king, Kanishka, continued to enlarge until his domain extended from Benares on the Ganges River to the Gobi Desert. Thus the Kushans were the first effectively to inspire the people of the Kabul Valley to become bestowers rather than receivers of authority. At Kapisa, the Kushan court rivalled that of the Caesars in Rome and of the Han in China.

The great Kushan dynasty sitting astride the Hindu Kush rose at a fortuitous time in world history. Caravans in ever increasing numbers passed between India and the sybaritic markets of Rome and China and the Kushans held strong control over this trade,

gaining from it wealth and power, their rulers exploiting every circumstance to their fullest advantage. The years in Bactria had wrought great changes on these nomads. Having no traditions on which to build a settled way of life, they adapted what they found in ways best suited to their own personality. What emerged was a vibrant indigenous culture born of the fusion of western oriented Greco-Bactrian ideals with those from eastern oriented India and interpreted by the forceful character of Central Asia. The result was vital and dynamic.

The plains of Begram are desolate today. The silent desert effectively hides within its hillocks the glories of the mighty kings who once ruled ancient Kapisa. Happily one day in 1939 the archaeologists' spade came upon a Kushan treasure which by itself provides an illuminating capsule version of the Kushan story. Here at Kapisa in two small rooms were exquisite Indian ivories wrought in the classic style of Maurya days, side by side with fine Chinese lacquers and an infinite variety of Roman art objects from that far-flung empire. These included numerous bas reliefs consecrated to Dionysus and his cortege of satyrs and bacchantes so long a favourite in the valley. Each piece of this treasure testifies to the existence of a rich trade with emporiums throughout the civilized world and to the existence of a highly refined and cultured citizenry at Kapisa.

The Kushans were patrons, not mere collectors of art. This patronage brought about the efflorescence of Gandharan art in which Greco-Roman art forms enriched by Indian forms were employed in the service of Buddhism. Buddhist texts are full of praise for the Kushan Kanishka, "King of Kings" (c. 100 A.D. ), whose benevolent auspices vivified Buddhism. This patronage occasioned a flurry of renewed missionary activity reminiscent of the days of Ashoka. Travelling with the caravans, Buddhist missionaries crossed the Hindu Kush and made their way into the Far East where their ideas took root so strongly in China and in Japan that they remain as a significant factor of twentieth century culture.

The accounts of Kanishka's interest in Buddhism are verified by numerous archaeological finds. It would be a mistake to limit his philosophical interest to this religion alone, however. On his coinage the Buddha represents only one of a wide pantheon of gods and goddesses, deities of Greek, Persian and Hindu origin. Furthermore, the presence of Persia and Greece, but not India, is evident among the ruins of Kanishka's temple at Surkh Kotal just north of the Hindu Kush where excavations seem to disclose the existence of a purely indigenous eclectic religion, unaffected by Buddhism, centered around the cult of fire. The cultural accomplishments of the Kushans were engendered by the liberal spirit fostered by their



leaders. Kapisa, their capital situated at the crossroads. was undoubtedly a prime source of inspiration.

### *Sassanians*

This happy state continued until trouble beset the world at large. By the end of the second century A.D. China was showing signs of decadence and shortly thereafter the Roman Empire was in a state of disorganization. The trade upon which Kushan prosperity depended was thus gravely disrupted. At the same time, we see the rise of a new purely Iranian dynasty in Persia, the Sassanians. Their eastern expansion brought them into conflict with the Kushans who accepted Sassanian suzerainty sometime around the middle of the 3rd century. Attempts to throw off the foreign yoke were made from time to time. There was a revival of Kushan power for six short years from 303 to 309 but then Shapur II (310-397) crushed them, reducing their territory to provincial status under Sassanian viceroys ruling from Balkh.

Though numerous indications point to Kushan vassalage, political dependence did not preclude cultural independence. The Sassanians had revived the ancient religion of Zoroaster and their kings were supported, often controlled, by a powerful Zoroastrian priesthood. In Kabul, the earliest surviving monuments date from the Kushano-Sassanian period but they are all Buddhist monuments. Furthermore, they reflect architectu-

ral and artistic styles inspired by Kushan and Gandharan examples. This applies equally to Tepe Maranjan, Shewaki, and Guldara which were important monasteries on the route from Kapisa, still the major city in the valley, to Gardez.

### *Hephthalites*

As we have seen before, signs of weakness signaled nomadic invasions from the steppes of Central Asia and the return of the Hindu Kush to its function as a barrier between north and south. This was again the case at this time when Hephthalites or White Huns took over Kushan territory in Bactria. About 400 A.D. they swept over the Hindu Kush and occupied Kapisa. Their rule here and in India is known principally for its furious destruction of Buddhist centers and ruthless oppression of the people. They ruled in Bactria for 100 years and held sway for another 100 years after they conquered the areas south of the Hindu Kush. And yet, outside of Chinese Buddhist sources, admittedly prejudiced against them, we know next to nothing about their presence in Afghanistan. Excavations by the French Archaeological Mission (DAFA) of Hephthalite graves near Kapisa attest to little more than their presence here which is also true of the Hephthalite pottery found at Ghazni and of their rock inscriptions at Uruzgan northwest of Qandahar. New excavations reopened by DAFA in 1963 outside

of Kunduz on what may in fact be the site of a royal Hephthalite cemetery are, therefore, being watched with considerable excitement.

For the moment all that remains to be recounted is the end of their power in 531 A.D. which was brought about by a coalition of the Western Turks and the Sassanians. During the subsequent partitioning of Hephthalite territory, Kabul was returned to the Sassanians who were, however, no longer strong enough to prevent a century of anarchy. During this time almost every valley flew the flag of its own independent petty Kushan or Hephthalite prince, many of whom had by this time adopted the religion of their subjects. We have a priceless account of this period by the Chinese pilgrim Hsuen-tsang, whose precise observations during his long journey from 630 to 644, give us the clearest picture of the valley since the days of the Greek writers. He stayed at Kapisa from May to August in 630 and again for a week on his return journey in 644, when he also visited Kabul.

Hsuen-tsang says of Kabul: "The climate is icy cold; the men are naturally fierce and impetuous. The king is a Turk. They have profound faith for the three precious objects of worship (Buddhism); he esteems learning and honors virtue." The chapter on Kapisa is a long one. From it we ascertain that it was still the paramount city of the valley and continued to be an important emporium of trade and a thriving

religious centre even though its political authority was limited to Kabul, Laghman, Jalalabad and Gandhara.

### *Arabs*

At the very moment when Hsuen-tsang was thus recording his impressions of the Kabul Valley, a dynamic new force swept out of the deserts far to the west. With striking rapidity the banner of Islam was carried out of Arabia across Syria into Persia where a crushing defeat was inflicted upon the Sassanians in 642. Seemingly invincible, the Arabs pressed on to come face to face with a rugged terrain new to these desert men. And the mountains were defended by equally rugged tribesmen. These were to prove obstinate obstacles. Approaching the heart of Afghanistan, via Qandahar and Ghazni, Islam's cyclonic forward push changed to a slow and difficult advance in which every mile was hotly disputed, attack after attack was repulsed, and conquered cities rested only to revolt.

Leading the defense at Kabul was a Turkish, possibly Hinduized, king of a dynasty variously referred to as the Kabul Shahi, the Turki Shahi, or the Ratbil Shahan, the latter referring to one of the dynasty's most celebrated figures. They had raised Kabul to paramountcy over Kapisa and now these kings of Kabul resisted the Arabs with such bravery that their exploits form the substance of many heroic tales in



early Islamic literature.

Kabul was captured by the invaders in 664 but only after a siege which lasted a full year. Persistent contumacy necessitated subsequent action and the city was actually fought for on several occasions. It succumbed only after long sieges or as the result of misadventure such as the time a wounded elephant fell in the gateway thus preventing the closing of the city's doors to the enemy. Finally, thoroughly exasperated, the Arabs sent in a special force called the Army of Peacocks. Somewhere, in a gorge between Ghazni and Kabul, 40,000 Arab soldiers met their destiny.

Despite such incidents the resistance of the Kabul Shahi was viewed with great respect by their adversaries as this tribute to their passing, by the Ghaznavid historian, Al-Biruni, reflects: "The Hindu Shahiya are now extinct, and of the whole house there is no longer the slightest remnant in existence. We must say that, in all their grandeur, they never slackened in the ardent desire of doing that which is good and right, that they were men of noble sentiment and noble bearing."

Two hundred years were to elapse before these princes could be forced to abandon their mountain fortress. During this time Islam and its protagonists triumphed in nearby states; Herat, Samarkand and Kashgar in the north, and the Seistan in the southwest were all ruled by Arab governors by the close

of the eighth century. Kabul itself lost some of its extensive territories to Herat and an Arab agent resided at Kabul to make sure tribute was appropriately forwarded to the Caliphs of Baghdad. Nevertheless, it retained its own princes and its submission was lax, its fealty loose. There was as yet no permanent occupation of Kabul by Islam.

### *Saffarids*

Elsewhere, enthusiasm for the new religion was great and gave rise to the formation of volunteer troops known as Warriors of the Faith who hired out their services to anyone conducting a holy war against the infidel. Although often described, even by early Islamic sources, as robbers and scoundrels, individuals of this group did sometimes achieve great fame and power. One such was Yaqub ibn Layth Saffari, a coppersmith from Seistan, who marched on Kabul in 871. Here he routed Kallar, an Indian Brahmin, who as prime minister had usurped the throne of Kabul in 850 and founded the Hindu Shahi Dynasty. Kallar fled to Gardez where he established a new capital from which he ruled for another few years until chased from the vicinity of Kabul by Amro ibn Laith. During this campaign the famous Hindu temple to Suriya in the Logar was destroyed and the Hindu power at Kabul was finally broken.

The rise of the Saffarids was indicative of the trou-

bles besetting the weakening Caliphate at Baghdad. Indigenous populations rose against their Arab conquerors in the eastern provinces; local chiefs replaced Arabs as governors and assumed virtual independence. During the last years of the ninth century the most powerful of these dynasties, the Samanid princes of Bokhara, extended their influence southward to acquire possession of Kabul c. 900. Being so far from Bokhara, Kabul reverted to the rule of local chiefs who were most probably invested by the Amirs of Bokhara to whom they paid a yearly tribute.

### *Gaznavids*

At the Samanid court a Turkish slave, Alptigin by name, rose to great power as Commander-in-Chief of the Samanid forces in Khorasan. When in 962 he was caught in an unsavory bit of court intrigue, he deemed immediate departure to be most prudent and set out to find a kingdom of his own. Heading south through Bamiyan, he took Ghazni in January 963 after a siege of four months. A successful future seemed assured him but fate decreed otherwise: he died the following September. The city, suffering under a series of inept successors, finally sent to Kabul where their former ruler, Abu Bakr Lawik, had sought refuge. Accepting with alacrity, their former king set forth immediately with his brother-in-law, the son of Kabul's chieftain, by his side. From Ghazni, Alptigin's slave

and son in-law, Sebuktigin, went out to the Logar Valley and joined in battle with the army from Kabul.

Victorious, Sebuktigin "came out of the fort of Ghazni with the umbrella, jewels, and banners and proceeded to the Jami Masjid where he was confirmed King" in April 977. Thus the glorious period of the Ghaznavids began. Sebuktigin extended his dominion by annexing the neighbouring petty states including Kabul, conquering in the name of Islam which became at last the faith of the valley. His son, the great Sultan Mahmud (998-1030), extended his sovereignty and gained special renown for his numerous iconoclastic forays into India from which he returned with vast stores of treasure: "jewels and unboiled pearls and rubies, shining like sparks in iced wine, emeralds as it were sprigs of young myrtle, diamonds as big as pomegranates." At Ghazni historians chronicled its story, poets sang of its glory and architects built a city worthy of its wealth and culture.

The Sultans of Ghazni reveled in splendour and opulence. They built palaces and gardens in every important city of the realm; Herat, Balkh, and Lashkar-i-Bazar. Kabul, a dependency of Ghazni throughout the Ghaznavid period, does not seem to have been thus favoured and we have only occasional references to the fact that the Sultans pitched their tents outside its gates. Terse though these references may be, they allow one to picture lively and colourful happenings



at Kabul. Imagine, for instance, the arrival of Sultan Mahmud in 1023 after a victorious campaign in India. He stopped at Kabul to review his troops: "54,000 well-equipped cavalry, 1,300 elephants in defensive armour, horses and camels beyond computation." Eight years later Sultan Mas'ud also stopped here to review his troops and we are told that he was pleased to find his "1,670 elephants all plump and ready for action."

### *Mongols*

After the death of Sultan Mahmud in 1030 we enter once more into a long period of turmoil where the gradually weakening Ghaznavids bowed before new powers rising in the north. These were fierce bold men from the hills southeast of Herat, masters of the newly established House of Ghor which was destined to rule Delhi. The Ghorids dominated the 12th century only to be swept away in the Kabul area by the start of the 13th by the Khwarizm from the eastern shores of the Caspian Sea. Kabul was included in the kingdom of Bamiyan during much of this time but central authority was but reluctantly endured and the city did obedience first to its local chieftains. It was a relatively peaceful prelude, however, to the devastating storm soon to erupt from the heart of Central Asia. Genghis Khan was on his way.

The Khwarizm Empire stretched from north of

Samarkand to the Arabian Sea and from the eastern borders of Afghanistan through central Persia. Its ruler, Sultan Muhammad, gloried in his power. When, therefore, Genghis Khan sent a mission demanding that a border governor be handed over for punishment, the Sultan singed off the beards of the envoys and returned them without comment. Who was this upstart Mongol who dared to make demands?

He soon learned, for it was his effrontery that raised the curtain on one of history's grimmest periods of destruction. By the beginning of 1220 Genghis Khan was in Balkh with 100,000 mounted men and the appalling scenes of devastation marking his path attested to the magnitude of his fury. Sultan Muhammad turned his back and fled, leaving the impossible situation in the hands of his son Jalal-ad-Din, a man of great courage and determination. Refusing to despair, he retired to Ghazni where his personality alone succeeded in uniting the independent tribes. In pursuit Genghis Khan sent 30,000 savage riders, each with three reserve horses. Quickly assembling his newly formed army, Jalal-ad-Din advanced to meet his enemy at the confluence of the Panjshir and Ghorband Rivers, northeast of modern Charikar, close to ancient Kapisa.

As the two armies faced each other across the Panjshir River that evening in the fall of 1221, the hearts of the Afghans were filled with dire misgivings for the

figures of a huge host loomed in the darkness. Their leader was not to be intimidated. He rallied them to the attack at dawn. With astonishment they watched their opponents flee, with amazement they examined the portion of the great host behind; they found them to be mere scarecrows of straw covered with felt, bound to the backs of the reserve horses. A propitious beginning this but unity was alien to these tribesmen and fell victim the very next day to a petty dispute over a horse. The strongest of the leaders rode off, leaving the alliance shattered behind him.

Genghis Khan did not take kindly to defeat. He advanced to the south like "flashing lightning" vanquishing every stronghold on his way. The barbarity inflicted upon those who resisted his advance is difficult to contemplate, much less describe. He stopped briefly on the Kabul battlefield and we may picture him here at the age of 59 astride a horse, his long-sleeved black sable coat set off by a high white felt hat from which long red streamers hung to frame his hardened face.

As this horde moved out of the valley on its way to the final battle with Jalal-ad-Din on the banks of the Indus, "the countryside was choked with horsemen, the air black with the dust of cavalry." Jalal-ad-Din succeeded in escaping across the Indus but his cause was utterly crushed and Genghis Khan pursued him no further. Retracing his steps, the conqueror passed again through Kabul in March 1222. Toward the end,

Genghis Khan seems to have suffered some uneasiness about his policy of total annihilation. It is said that upon asking an Afghan prince if the blood he had shed would remain forever in the memory of men, he was assured, with considerable temerity, that the present rate of blood-letting would certainly preclude the existence of man to harbour any such memories. So it must have seemed to the peoples of this time.

Genghis Khan died in 1227 and the old territory of Khwarizm was left in the hands of his son Chagatai who completed the subjugation of the mountain tribes of Afghanistan. For 100 years they remained in the grip of the Mongols. By the end of this period the far-flung empire of the khans had begun to crumble and once more Kabul was caught in the ensuing scramble for power.

These struggles were fought for personal gain unmindful of the ruin and desolation of the indigenous people and their countries, hence recovery from the holocaust was painfully slow. Local Turkish chiefs administering the provinces for their Mongol lords were sometimes successful in relegating their lords to a new Mongol figure to restart the cycle. The most powerful jockeying for power took place in the north around Bokhara and Samarkand for the Mongols did not settle in great numbers south of the Hindu Kush, but the effects of the chaotic struggles in the north nonetheless submerged the southern provinces in pov-



erty and widespread lawlessness. It was an era of petty autocrats whose authority scarcely extended beyond their own villages.

That Kabul was victim to these machinations is all too evident from the poignant account of the Moroccan traveller, Ibn Battuta. On visiting Kabul in 1333 he writes: "We travelled on to Kabul, formerly a vast town, the site of which is now occupied by a village inhabited by a tribe of Persians called Afghans. They hold mountains and defiles and possess considerable strength, and are mostly highwaymen."

### *Timurids*

Three years later in 1336 a boy was born in a small valley fifty miles south of Samarkand. His early life, from 1360 on, mirrors the chaos of these times but he was destined to become its master. This was Timur, known to European histories as Tamerlane. Son of an impoverished Turkish chieftain, Timur journeyed to Samarkand where his services on behalf of the Turkish governor were so appreciated that he won the hand of the governor's grand-daughter whose brother was then Prince Husain of Kabul. Not long after, however, a Mongol lord of the Chagatais appeared from the east to reclaim his heritage both in Samarkand and in Kabul. Timur, in a series of wily maneuvers, emerged as regent for the Mongol in Transoxiana but his position was precarious and before long he and his

bride were forced to seek refuge in the mountains of the Hindu Kush.

Searching for the deposed Husain, they entered the valley of Kabul where they furtively bartered outside the city for fresh horses before continuing south to a rendezvous with Husain in the vicinity of Qandahar. Here with nothing but boundless ambition, they engaged in the life of soldiers of fortune. They fought well for the local chieftain and it was during one of these battles that Timur received a foot wound from which he never fully recovered which is why some of his chroniclers, in vituperation, call him Timur-i-Lang, Timur the Lamé. Little by little the reputation of their prowess grew until, from Kabul to the Aral Sea, the tribes rallied to their cause. By the close of 1369 Timur divested himself of his avaricious companion Husain, and was proclaimed sovereign at Balkh,

The next few years were occupied with campaigns in the north but his strength and leadership brought about stability throughout the realm and led to a gradual recovery of the south. By 1397 he was eyeing India. Though somewhat hesitant at first, he received much encouragement from his sons. One argued that "whichever Sultan conquers India becomes supreme over the four quarters of the globe," while another pointed out that "India is full of gold and silver, diamonds and ruby and emerald...", and his grandson, Pir Muhammad, Governor of Kabul, sent urgent

petitions advising him that the "time for conquest is propitious." Timur himself says, "My object in the invasion of Hindustan is to lead a campaign against the infidels, to convert them....." A campaign that offered power, wealth, opportunity, and glory to God, was hardly to be resisted. Accordingly, with an army "as numerous as the leaves of tree," Timur set out from Samarkand in March 1398 to conquer Delhi. In August he came to Kabul where he pitched his tent on a nearby meadow.

Kabul under Pir Muhammad was now the prosperous capital of a province which included Kunduz, Badakhshan, Ghazni, Qandahar, and the territory to the east, as far as the Indus. Timur visited at this important capital with all the pomp and ceremony befitting a powerful potentate. He had two royal pavilions for use while travelling so that one could be sent ahead to be readied for his arrival. We are indebted to a European traveller, Clavijo, Ambassador of Castile, who on visiting Timur in 1403 wrote this colourful description of Timur's travelling accommodations: "The pavilion was a hundred paces broad, and had four corners and the ceiling was round like a vault. It was pitched upon twelve poles each as large around as a man's chest, and each painted gold and blue and other colours. From the vault of the ceiling of the pavilion silken cloths descended, making an arch from side to side. There was a crimson carpet embroidered

with gold threads. In the four corners were the figures of four eagles with their wings closed. The outside of the pavilion was covered with silk stripes, black, white and yellow. At each corner was a high pole with a copper ball and the figure of a crescent, and on the top of the pavilion there was a tower of silken cloths, with turrets and an entrance door. This pavilion was so large and high that from a distance it looked like a castle, and it was a very wonderful thing to see and possessed more beauty than it is possible to describe."

Timur held all state ceremonies in these pavilions, preferring them to any palace. While at Kabul he received an ambassador from Persia who came with a tribute so large that the court recorders worked unceasingly for three days and nights in listing it. The presentation ceremony was one of the most spectacular events recorded in the historical narratives of this period. For a full day the treasure passed in review: leopards, birds of prey, robes of gold and brocade of every hue, camels, mules, Arab horses with gold saddles, pavilions, tents, couches, hangings, vessels and gems of every variety.

So we can picture Timur at Kabul and wonder if the monarch so ensconced amidst such splendor turned memory back to his earliest visit to the valley.

Timur the warrior had spread his conquests far and wide during which he had acquired a reputation for



being cruel and savage. At his capital in Samarkand and in such northern cities as Herat, a different side of his character unfolded. Here he began a renaissance of culture by his avid patronage of artists and all men of learning and by his passionate beautification of his cities. This trait was strongly inherited by his son and successor Shah Rukh under whose wise and just rule from 1404 to 1447, the Timurid dynasty enjoyed its greatest glory. However, the new life which returned to the lands of the Hindu Kush during these years was stunted in later years by ceaseless internal strife in which every descendant of Timur aspired to supreme authority, be it in the capital, a province, a town, or a valley. A hundred years after the death of Timur it was his descendant Ulugh Beg who ruled at Kabul.

### *Moghuls*

Far to the north, just east of Samarkand, was another small valley kingdom where a young crown prince boasted direct descent from both Genghis Khan and Timur. Such an elite heritage was not enough, however, to spare him from internal intrigue when his father's death placed him on the throne in 1495 at the age of twelve. In addition, the powerful Uzbeks from Transoxiana took advantage of the young king's troubles to sweep down upon him, forcing him at length to flee with a few impoverished followers. He turned at first to powerful relatives ruling rich cities of the

north but they, having noted the determination with which he defended his valley and being jealous in the protection of their own thrones, deemed it wise to spurn him.

So, Zahir-ad-Din Muhammad, later known as Babur, the Tiger, wandered over the Hindu Kush until, in October 1504, he looked upon Kabul, a city but recently usurped from Ulugh Beg's successor. From the heights of Bamaru he saw a valley beautiful in its fall colours and from informants he learned that the city was seething with discontent. Babur attacked, unseated the usurper and won a throne. He was passionately entranced with the beauty of his new home and immediately set about to embellish his capital. Numerous gardens, for which he brought in saplings and seeds from lands to the north, were laid out under his personal supervision. In the midst of these gardens, new buildings rose.

The court indulged in simple pleasures. Of his early days in Kabul, Babur recounts with appreciation the remembrance of a well turned phrase and those hours spent in sharing a cup of wine with friends in one or the other of his new gardens. This simplicity was in marked contrast to the opulent court of his relatives in Herat, as he himself notes.

It was not, however, a completely easy throne upon which to sit. Though the tribes of Kabul readily acquiesced to his leadership, he says those of the other val-

leys were fierce and difficult to subdue. Persistently he moved on to Peshawar, to Ghazni, into the Hazarajat to Ghor, over the Hindu Kush to Badakhshan, and later south to Qandahar. While away on these campaigns he had constantly to keep in touch with affairs at home, for his family, now comfortably ensconced on large estates surrounding the city, easily forgot their debt to his leadership and plotted against him for his throne.

He persevered, however, and twenty years after his arrival, with affairs at home under control and with expansion to the north and west pushed as far as possible, the lure of India caught Babur as it had caught so many empire builders before him. Ambition drove him to leave the rugged mountain for the fertile plain but he left Kabul in 1525 with considerable reluctance. From this time onward he ruled from a new capital at Agra but he never abandoned Kabul in his heart. At Panipat, scene of his decisive victory over Delhi in 1526, he built a mosque in commemoration of this battle. He named it the Kabul Shah Mosque in honour of the land he loved. Later, repeated instructions concerning the repair and upkeep of buildings and gardens in Kabul were sent to his son Kamran, now instated as Governor of Kabul, for, as he says: "I have a longing beyond expression to return to Kabul. How can its delights ever be erased from my heart."

Babur was a brilliant military strategist whose resoluteness founded the great Moghul Empire, and yet, in the story of Kabul, the image of the warrior is tempered by his love of poetry and beauty, his delight in nature, and his generosity toward those around him. It was upon the pleasures of this life that the dying monarch's thoughts dwelt a few short years later when he willed that he should be laid to rest in a favourite garden at Kabul. Unrest following his demise in 1530 prevented the immediate fulfillment of this wish and for nine years he remained buried at Agra, not far from where the Taj Mahal now stands. When at length his last journey was made, it was his faithful Afghan wife, Bibi Mubarika Yusufzai, who brought him to his beloved Kabul.

Humayun, Akbar, Jahangir and Shah Jahan, protagonists of the quintessence in oriental magnificence, now enter this story. Ruling from Agra and Delhi, these Moghul princes found their western provinces to be uneasy possessions. Important cities like Herat and Qandahar were wrested from them in time and the recalcitrant tribes between Kabul and India had often to be assuaged with healthy allowances. In spite of this, they zealously retained their hold on Kabul for its position was strategic, and these sons of Babur had inherited much of their ancestor's fondness for the valley.

Each of these kings had occasion to visit Kabul,



either on pleasure or in the course of protecting their outlying territories; Akbar in 1581, Jahangir in 1607, and Shah Jahah in 1640. Such visits gave an impetus to the cultural life of the city which was during this time further embellished by buildings and gardens wrought in the elegant style developed by the Moghuls. Graceful pavilions similar to those at Lahore and Delhi rose upon the outer walls of Bala Hissar and along the riverside. In the heart of the city, Kabul's governor, the celebrated Ali Mardan Khan (d. 1657), built a covered bazaar, the Chahr Chatta, which was to remain famous throughout the next two centuries for its fountains, murals, and exotic merchandise. A few years later, in 1640, Shah Jahan built a graceful marble mosque in Babur's Garden, close to the simple tomb of his forefather.

### *Ghilzais*

The 16th and 17th centuries were, therefore, comparatively peaceful times for Kabul due in part to the fact that power in India under the Moghuls had been paralleled by equal power in Persia under the Safavid Dynasty. By the beginning of 18th century, however, both houses had succumbed to a surfeit of luxury and local rulers began to stir. At Qandahar, then under the Persians, Ghilzai chieftains declared their independence, defeated the Persian armies come to contest their claim, and pushed on to take possession of

the Safavid throne at Isfahan. Theirs was but a short lived occupancy lasting only from 1722 to 1730, when they were defeated by the Persian general Nadir Shah Afshar who, after seating himself upon the Persian throne, went on to capture Qandahar in March 1738.

### *Nadir Shah Afshar*

His next objective was the throne of Delhi which he approached via Kabul in May. Though the Moghul garrison's weak resistance was overcome by June, Nadir Shah remained in the city until September before descending into India. Strongly supported by his trusted Afghan general Ahmad Khan Abdali leading his tribal followers, Nadir Shah defeated the Moghuls, gathered a rich booty and returned to Kabul in 1740, leaving the Moghul king to rule India under Persian suzerainty. The territory west of the Indus, however, was transferred to direct Persian rule and a rearguard of several thousand Qizilbash troops, for whom four large garrisons were built, were left behind in Kabul. The Qizilbash formed the center of Nadir Shah's army, always fighting close to their leader; his most trusted servants and fanatical Shias. However, Nadir Shah lacked the genius to forge an empire out of his conquests and the interim of his tenure is therefore significant to this story only because it set the stage for the emergence of Afghanistan.

## *Ahmad Shah Durrani*

The new epoch opens in violence with the assassination of Nadir Shah in 1747. At Qandahar, the seat of local independence prior to the rise of Nadir Shah, powerful tribal chieftains reviewed the signs and concluded that recent events had been but a temporary interruption of their goals: India, under waning Moghul power, lay inert; Persia, rent with internal dissensions, lay impotent. The time was without question theirs, but who was to lead them? Day after day at the tribal council powerful chiefs proudly proclaimed their individual merits with ever increasing vehemence. At length, when all seemed lost, a seer came forward to point to a quiet young man, that same Ahmad Khan Abdali, 25, so recently the trusted general of Nadir Shah. Miraculously, the haughty chiefs acquiesced and proclaimed him Ahmad Shah, King of the Afghans.

Knowing that he must give proof of his abilities, Ahmad Shah's first move was toward Kabul where he easily overcame the resistance of the disheartened Qizilbash garrisons. He then advanced upon the tottering Moghuls in Delhi where he was actually invited to accept the throne of India. Declining, he took only the lands west of the Indus. "I will conquer countless lands; And revive the memory of Sher Shah; But I cannot forget the fascinating orchards of my motherland; When I think of the mountain peaks of

my country; I forget the throne of Delhi.”

This Pashtu poem from his own pen is indicative of the man and his objectives.

Ahmad Shah's military campaigns were many but they are incidental to his real contribution to this story already liberally sprinkled with brilliant military figures. His genius lay instead in his ability to imbue his intractable, volatile countrymen with a national conscience. While travelling from his capital in Qandahar to visit with tribal chieftains throughout his realm, he often had occasion to visit Kabul, where he stayed, not in the marble palaces of the lofty Bala Hissar, but in a garden in the city, accessible to those who wished to see him. It was through simple gestures such as this that Ahmad Shah Baba, Father of the Afghans, achieved his remarkable goal: Afghanistan, Land of the Afghan.

Ahmad Shah brought about this national cohesiveness in the incredibly short time of twenty-six years but on his death in 1772 the age-old plague of fraternal jealousies returned to place it in jeopardy. In retaliation for the disloyalty exhibited by the people of Qandahar over the accession, Timur Shah, the second son whom Ahmad Shah had chosen, transferred the capital to Kabul.

The political history from this point presents a fast moving kaleidoscopic story filled with grim internecine struggles boding a hasty end for the new Afghanistan.



Timur Shah's unfinished mausoleum in the center of Kabul stands today as a monument to these unsettled times. For the reader who enjoys exciting adventure stories packed with a wealth of glamorous figures and ingenious plots, this period offers fascinating reading. The details are beyond the scope of this simple survey and are furthermore available in a number of works in English. Here we must content ourselves with a few salient events and personalities specifically involving the life of the city.

### *Amir Dost Mohammad Khan*

The struggles for paramountcy were played out in the palaces and dungeons of Bala Hissar where oriental splendor replaced the simplicity of Ahmad Shah. Splendor did not, however, command obedience and by the time Dost Muhammad Khan, the first of the Muhammadzai Dynasty, secured the throne of Kabul in 1826, his authority was respected scarcely more than a hundred miles from the city. Even within this radius, each valley fort did obeisance first to its own chief. Beyond this radius the country was divided between Herat and Qandahar ruled by bitterly opposed members of the same family. Of the contenders, Amir Dost Muhammad was the most outstanding.

During his reign Kabul played cordial host to an ever increasing parade of western visitors, acute observers who wrote voluminously and vividly for an

excited public eager to devour the minutest of details concerning this all but unknown land. We can walk with them and in so doing find ourselves very much at home. The city was smaller than it is today. About three miles in circumference, it covered the approximate area now bounded by Bala Hissar, the Spinzar Hotel and the defile between the hills of Asmai and Sher Darwaza. In the center, near Pul-i-Khishti, several large serais catered to caravans arriving from far-off lands as they had been doing from time immemorial. The goods they brought "from most every part of the world" were offered for sale in the covered bazaars of the Chahr Chatta and in the Shor and Darwaza Lahori bazaars, two main streets which ran from Pul-i-Khishti to the foot of Bala Hissar through the densely packed residential section of the city. Other specialty markets, such as the grain and cattle markets, were located on the left bank of the river and large garden estates took up the remaining space.

The villages of Deh Afghanan and Deh Mazang clung to the sides of Asmai as they today but present day Shahr-i-Nau was then laid out in small farms which produced fruits and vegetables for the city. The Amir and his retinue continued to live in the palaces of Bala Hissar where there was also a separate city unit of about 1,000 houses. All together the city's population during these early years of the 19th century was estimated to be between 50-60,000, which repre-

sented an increase of 40,000 from the day Timur Shah first brought his court to Kabul.

This was the prize for which the rival claimants gambled. Amir Dost Muhammad's efforts to maintain his position were further complicated by the entrance of foreign powers into the desperate game. Napoleon's intrigues in Persia first directed the British in India to open official relations with the Court of Kabul as early as 1809. Russia's steady advance southward toward the Oxus River deepened their concern. Acutely aware of Afghanistan's age-old position as a highway from Persia and Central Asia to India, they took an active interest in the seating and unseating of princes on the throne of Kabul during the remainder of the 19th century. They had rich investments to protect. Twice this interest involved the actual participation of British troops: first in 1838-1842 during the First Anglo-Afghan War and again in 1878-1880 during the Second Anglo-Afghan War.

### *First Anglo-Afghan War*

During the first of these episodes the British escorted Shah Shujah, an exile in India for thirty years, back to the throne of Kabul. To do this they deposed Amir Dost Muhammad who was accused of negotiating favourably with Persia, where Russian influence was strong, and with Russia in a manner considered to be hostile to British interests.

Since feelings ran high against the puppet Shah Shujah, British troops stayed in Kabul to support him. They built a large walled-in cantonment to the northeast on the right side of Ansari Wat (airport road). Here officers' wives carefully tended to their gardens, hemmed dainty handkerchiefs, and dined off imported mahogany tables. The men passed their leisure time in enjoying various equestrian sports with their Afghan friends. As winter came on British officers fashioned skates out of locally procured wood and iron and joined the Afghans in their graceful sport of sliding on the frozen waters of Wazirabad Lake. As the spring thaws arrived, one Englishman launched a sailboat on this lake which proved to be an object of considerable fascination for both Afghan and Englishman. During the summer, hockey, cricket, football and quoits were played on these meadows which also provided an exciting course for the steeplechase. At the cantonment, Afghans dined with the British officers in their mess hall and sat as an enthusiastic audience in the especially constructed theatre where Sir Alexander Burnes is said to have translated English comedies into Persian with remarkable skill. In return, the Englishmen were invited to Afghan homes in the city and to "share in the field sport in their country castles."

The pleasant living and the camaraderie thus reported by the participants was but a false facade. Only



a very small proportion of Kabul's citizens welcomed the foreigners. The rest of the city and of Afghanistan was seething in opposition to the policies dictating the British presence; resentment ran deep in the hearts of the tribesmen who valued their independence so highly and they chafed at the outside interference in their midst. This resentment culminated in the massacre of the retreating British forces on the road to Jalalabad in January, 1842. At Kabul, Shah Shujah was ambushed and killed by his own people not far from the citadel of Bala Hissar on the 5th of April.

British troops under General Pollock, later entitled "The Avenger", returned the following September from Jalalabad followed closely by General Nott from Qandahar. They found the gates of the citadel standing open, the city deserted, its people fled with their valuables to Istalif. A few days later they were joined by the 120-odd British prisoners who had been taken as hostages by Dost Muhammad's son, Akbar Khan as security for his father's well-being. Except for one officer who reached Jalalabad, these hostages were the only British to survive.

On October 10th, searching for a "mark" to leave on the city to remind it of the British power for revenge, General Pollock issued orders for the destruction of the Chahr Chatta, the great bazaar which was the city's famed adornment. While this was being carried out soldiers and camp followers broke through author-

ity to set most every quarter of the city, except the Bala Hissar and the Qizilbash section of Chandawal, to the torch. The glow from these fires still filled the sky as the troops left the city two days later.

The disastrous failure of the British policy in unseating Amir Dost Muhammad led authorities in India to view their erstwhile prisoner with new favour. Amir Dost Muhammad quietly returned to Kabul in January, 1843 and reoccupied his throne without fanfare. He ruled successfully for the next twenty years during which time he annexed to the Kingdom of Kabul the territories of the north and of Qandahar by 1853 and of Herat in 1863, a few months before his death.

### *Amir Sher Ali Khan*

The Amir's death heralded bitter controversies between his sons over the succession. At the same time Russia renewed its steady drive toward the Oxus River. This reinforced British interest in Afghanistan and in 1869 a cordial meeting between the incumbent at Kabul, Amir Sher Ali Khan, and the Viceroy took place in India. But Russia continued to advance and further initiated a steady correspondence with Kabul. When finally they dispatched a Mission to Kabul in 1878, the Viceroy of India countered by sending a British Mission to Kabul, a move they had desired for years but which the Amir had consistently refused.

## *Second Anglo-Afghan War*

The Amir earnestly desired the absence of both Missions from his capital, but his advice went unheeded. On the 21st of September, 1878 the British Mission advanced to the Khyber Pass where the commandant of the fort at Ali Masjid refused them entry. A month later, no answer to their ultimatum having been received, British troops forcibly crossed Afghanistan's southeastern border thus initiating the Second Anglo-Afghan War. Amir Sher Ali Khan then quitted Kabul for Russia with the intention of laying his grievances before that court which had professed such staunch friendship. In Kabul the Amir left his son Yakub Khan as Regent.

In order to prevent the further advance of British troops into Afghanistan, Yakub Khan met with the British at Gandamak in May and there concluded a treaty ending, so it was thought, the Second Anglo-Afghan War. One of the principal provisions of this Treaty of Gandamak called for the Amirs of Afghanistan to "henceforth conduct all relations with foreign States in accordance with the advice and wishes of the British Government."

Amir Sher Ali Khan died in Mazar-i-Sharif in February, 1879, having been refused admittance to Russia, and Yakub Khan became Amir at Kabul. The following July, Sir Louis Cavagnari arrived in Kabul to establish a permanent British Resident Mission, an-

other provision of the Treaty of Gandamak. In September mutinous troops attacked the Mission, killing all but three or four of its members and burning their quarters in Bala Hissar to the ground. This news put the still mobilized British troops again on the march under General Roberts and the second phase of the Second Anglo-Afghan War opened.

General Roberts occupied Kabul via the Logar valley in October. Once settled in their cantonments at Sherpur, the troops set about enjoying the valley; bamboo punts, flat-bottomed canoes and row boats skimmed along on Wazirabad Lake, cricket and polo teams met in contest, and there were many competitions at horseracing. The city, returned to its former prosperity, continued to fascinate: "Towards the afternoons the main bazaars present a most lively and animated appearance, and are densely and incongruously crowded: camels, elephants, mules, horsemen, Afghans and Englishmen all jostling along in a busy stream."

The question of how to proceed was a vexing one. Amir Yakub Khan had resigned and the chiefs had raised his son as Amir, who, however, was too young to serve as more than a figurehead. Moreover, despite the pleasurable pursuits recorded by the participants, there was no lack of the old resentment and by the middle of December forces from north, south, and west were converging on Kabul. Thinking to head



off a meeting of these forces, General Roberts sent out troops against them only to be driven back behind the walls of the Cantonment where he was besieged for nine days while the leader of the Afghan forces, Muhammad Jan Khan, held control of the city.

The assault was then suddenly abandoned. The British emerged from behind the walls of Sherpur to find the mountains and the plains which had bristled with thousands of hostile tribesmen now quiet and serene. The city lay before them undefended; contentions between the chieftains had dissolved their alliance and the tribesmen had returned to their villages. Roberts assumed control of the city but the British Government was not interested in actual annexation. The desperate search for a leader capable of conciliating the varied interests eventually turned toward one Abdur Rahman who had recently crossed the Oxus with a small following. During the struggles for succession following Amir Dost Muhammad's death in 1863, Abdur Rahman had fought vigorously on his father's behalf thereby establishing his reputation as a man of strength. His father, however, died in 1867 after a short and tenuous reign of one year whereupon Abdur Rahman retired in exile to Russia. His appearance was now welcomed with great optimism.

### *Amir Abdur Rahman*

The new Amir of Kabul was officially recognized

at a durbar on the 22nd of July, 1880. On the 11th of August the British troops marched out of Kabul: 23,000 troops and 40,000 followers accompanied by large droves of cattle and every description of transport, "carts, hackeries, ekkas, elephants, camels, mules, ponies, donkeys, and pack bullocks." They left a country divided within and beset from without. As Amir Abdur Rahman himself says in his autobiography, "when I first succeeded to the throne of Kabul my life was not a bed of roses. Here began my first severe fight against my own relatives, my own subjects, and my own people."

Amir Abdur Rahman, however, was admirably equal to the task set before him. Strong and ruthless in his dealings with internal insurrection, knowledgeable in his relationships with neighbouring countries, able as an administrator, he quickly exchanged chaos for stability; Qandahar and Herat bowed to the authority of Kabul, neighbouring countries settled long standing border disputes and Afghanistan as we know it today emerged.

At Kabul there was much to be done. A new palace and citadel, known as the Arg, was begun near Deh Afghanan and around it farms gave way to a fashionable residential area. Here the Arg bazaar was built and princes and courtiers built homes surrounded by lovely gardens. Accounts of the gracious living enjoyed at the palaces at Babur's Gardens, Chilsitoun,

Bagh-i-Bala, Shahrara, and Paghman bespeak a return to tranquility. Foreign conquest, in the past a favoured means of maintaining the allegiance of the tribes, was no longer feasible but Amir Abdur Rahman had learned much from his days beyond the frontier and turned his energies instead to an avid championship of new workshops, schools and hospitals. By 1901, Kabul's population had risen to an estimated 140-160,000.

### *Amir Habibullah*

Late in September of 1901 Amir Abdur Rahman passed away at his favourite new palace of Bagh-i-Bala. Due to the fear of possible palace intrigue, his body was secretly carried into the city and buried in the east wing of the Bustan Seraj, his private city palace, which remains today as his mausoleum. His son, Prince Habibullah, ascended the throne without incident on the 3rd of October, to begin a reign which followed the general principles of development laid down by his father. The city continued to grow: the new bazaar near the Arg expanded; Dilkhusha Palace and other palaces in the Arg were built: various public buildings such as the Id Mosque and the shrine at Khwaja Safa were enlarged. Perhaps the greatest single innovation in the city during this reign was the introduction of electricity.

## *King Amannllah*

Amir Habibullah was cut down by the hand of an assassin near Jalalabad in February, 1919 upon which his son Amanullah succeeded to the throne. A quickening of modern innovations was immediately evident. Chafing under the remnants of British suzerainty, the continued control of external affairs, Amir Amanullah instigated the Third Anglo-Afghan War or War of Independence. Hostilities commenced at Turkham in the Khyber Pass on the 3rd of May. On the 24th, Kabul experienced its first aerial bombing. General Nadir Khan and his brother Shah Wali Khan, directing matters with great flourish and causing the British considerable discomfort on the Central and Southern fronts, advanced some distance into British India. By the 3rd of June there was talk of an armistice, on the 20th of July Afghan and British diplomats met and on the 8th of August the Treaty of Rawalpindi was signed. This was a provisional treaty which prepared the way for a final treaty granting full independence to Afghanistan which was fully ratified at Kabul on November 22, 1921.

To celebrate Afghanistan's entrance into the community of sovereign nations, a new capital for the new nation was begun in Chahrdeh at Darulaman, where elaborate European styled buildings sprang into being. Trolley lines were laid to connect the old city with the new, streets were widened to accomodate an increase



in motor traffic, new highways were begun, and the old cantonment at Sherpur gave way to become Kabul's first airfield.

As diplomatic relations were established with other countries, Kabul played host for the first time to foreign embassies and legations: Russia, Turkey, Germany, Britain, Iran, Italy, France. In 1926 Amir Amanullah assumed the title of King and in December of the following year he embarked upon a tour of Europe where he was welcomed with enthusiasm while the press exclaimed ecstatically over the beauty and charm of the gracious Queen Soraya. On their return the palaces of Kabul and Jalalabad were redecorated with the choicest of their purchases and the building boom spread to Paghman where triumphal arches, ornate theaters, cafes, hotels, racecourses, bandstands, and villas rose with amazing speed. Comprehensive political and social reforms were promulgated at the same time and here the people balked. Incited by conservative leaders from the Shor Bazaar of Kabul, the country was set aflame.

By the end of 1928 universal rebellion had crystallized under the banner of Bacha Saqao, son of a water-carrier, who came with his band from the Koh Daman to take possession of the city in mid-January, 1929. King Amanullah left Kabul by Rolls Royce for Qandahar, leaving the throne to his brother King Inayatullah who followed three days later in a British plane.

Bacha Saqo then assumed the title of Amir Habibullah Ghazi, but it was the mob which ruled in the streets of Kabul, burning and looting its palaces already broken by the shells of heavy bombardment. Outside the city the country once more writhed in anarchy, unable to offer its trust to anyone. In Europe, General Nadir Khan, once Commander-in-Chief and the hero of the War of Independence but more recently estranged and sent as Ambassador to France, heard of the distress of his country and hurried to India with his brothers.

For a tortured interval he could do no more than pace the floor of his room at Dean's Hotel in Peshawar for he had only a moderate following, scanty equipment and scantier funds. Undaunted, he crossed the border in March, 1929 and despite initial setbacks, pushed on through Pakhtia province toward the capital, securing the confidence of the hesitant as he went. By the beginning of October the advance led by Sardar Shah Wali Khan, the General's brother, reached Kabul. Bacha Saqao fled, was captured and hung.

### *King Nadir Shah*

Six days later an all-Afghan Jirgah proclaimed Nadir Khan King of Afghanistan. The task before him was monumental: to establish order out of internal chaos meant inevitable dissatisfaction among those curtailed; to maintain profitable international relations

gave rise to grave criticism from those traditionally suspicious of outside interference. In the end these factors led to the regrettable assassination of King Nadir Shah on the grounds of the Dilkhusha Palace on the 8th of November, 1933. The patriotism of the royal family, however, permitted an untroubled resolution of the potentially dangerous situation thus created; at 6:00 the same evening the King's 19 year old son, Prince Muhammad Zahir Shah, was proclaimed King of Afghanistan.

### *His Majesty Muhammad Zahir Shah*

At first under the loyal guidance of his wise and capable uncles and subsequently by virtue of his own able leadership, His Majesty King Zahir Shah has continued to lead Afghanistan toward increased prosperity and a respected place among the world's nations. The city of Kabul reflects this. Busy traffic hums along in a steady stream past new multi-story buildings in which men and women labour together in the interest of their country's development. The demand for more personnel requires the constant expansion of educational facilities of which the new buildings of the Kabul University are striking examples.

Hotels, restaurants, movie houses and theatres are also a part of the scene. Sophisticated imports may be purchased along the main thoroughfares and yet, by the river and on meandering side streets, one may find the

colourful sights associated with exotic oriental bazaars filled with goods of every description. The city is changing and growing with such rapidity that it is hard to keep track of it; every day old landmarks fall to be replaced with the new. Future development calls for expansion on every side according to a carefully prepared master plan which the Municipality of Kabul presented to the Government of Afghanistan in November, 1964. With all this, the people of Kabul are still devoted to the natural beauties of their valley and tucked away on the mountain slopes there are picturesque retreats for picnics and gay outings, and for contemplation.

Today one may travel to Kabul via any of several airlines which service its most modern airport. Or, one may arrive via broad highways recently completed. Whichever the means of approach, upon arriving at this city of 500,000, the visitor will find that its citizens stand tall, handsome, happy and proud.

This is their heritage from Kabul.



## THE TOURS

**EACH TOUR** of Kabul begins at Pushtunistan Square in front of the Khyber Restaurant. To facilitate visitors in a hurry, the most important items are listed at the beginning of each tour. The number of the paragraph in which specific sites are discussed follows each listing, in brackets. These items are also printed in bold type in the body of the text.

All paragraphs have been numbered to permit easy reference and to enable readers to follow the tours as smoothly as possible should they wish to skip certain items.

The simplified maps accompanying the major tours are for easy and quick orientation. For more detailed information consult the large fold-out map included in the back of the book.

**Tour I** includes most of Kabul's most outstanding sights.

**Tour II** includes the bazaars, the history of the citadel of Bala Hissar, and a glimpse of an historic valley much revered for its four holy shrines.

**Tour III** includes a modern residential section and the University campus.

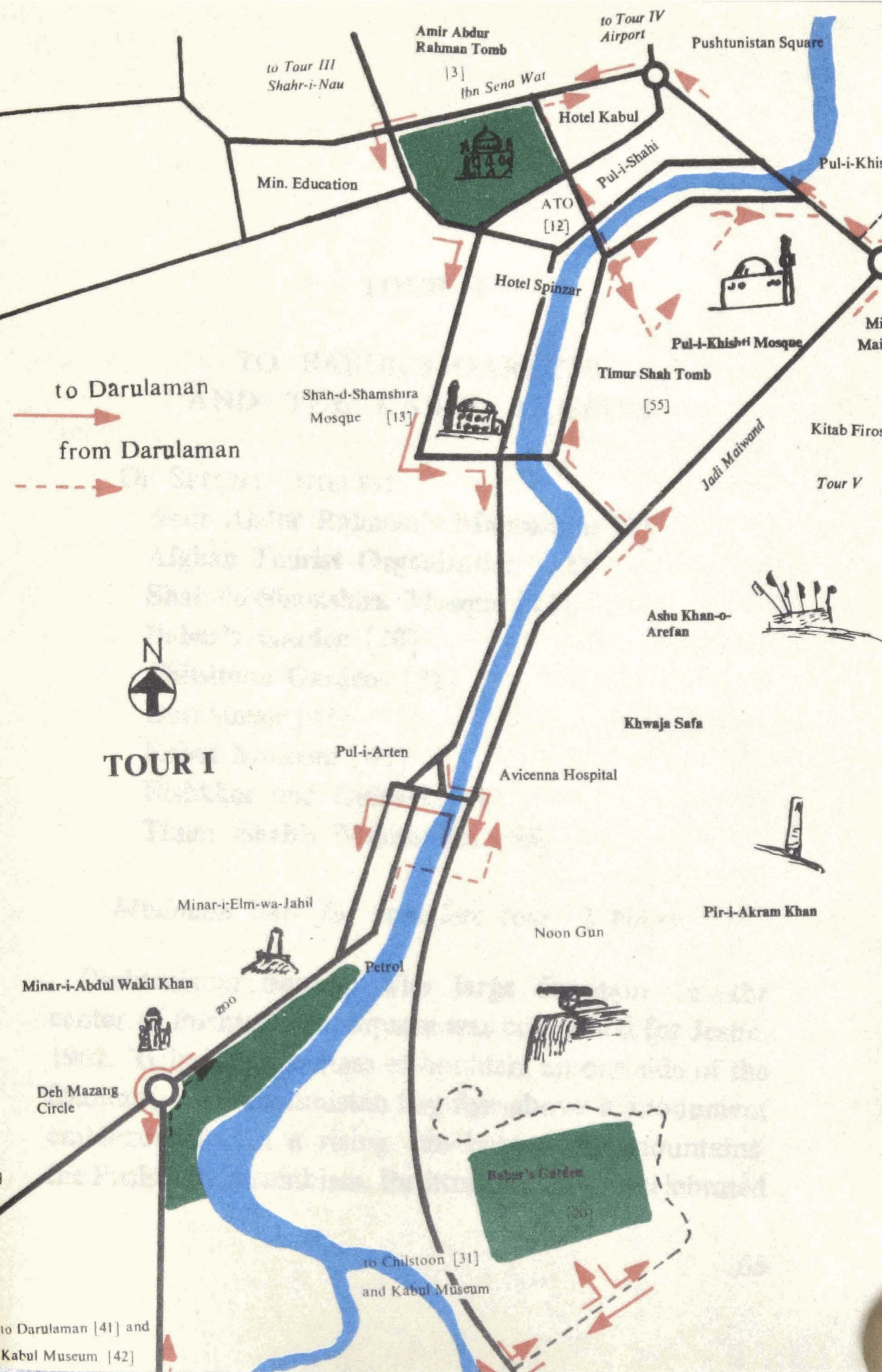
**Tour IV** discusses the Royal Palace or Arg and the sites along the road to the airport.

**Tour V** is intended for those interested in a pleasant afternoon's climb.

The next section covers restaurants and evening entertainment in Kabul; popular Afghan dishes and a general guide to shopping in the city.

Descriptions of eight places within easy reach of Kabul follow. Transportation may be arranged through the Afghan Tourist Bureau, located on the first floor of the Ministry of Information and Culture Building.









# **TOUR I**

## **TO BABUR'S GARDENS AND THE KABUL MUSEUM**

### **OF SPECIAL INTEREST**

- Amir Abdur Rahman's Mausoleum [3]**
- Afghan Tourist Organization [12]**
- Shah-do-Shamshira Mosque [13]**
- Babur's Garden [20]**
- Chilsitoon Gardens [31]**
- Darulaman [41]**
- Kabul Museum [42]**
- Rishkhor and Gulbagh [49]**
- Timur Shah's Mausoleum [55]**

*Minimum time for complete tour: 3 hours*

**Pushtunistan Square.** The large fountain in the center of Pushtunistan Square was completed for Jeshn, 1962. Rising from a mass of boulders on one side of the fountain, the Pushtunistan flag flies above a monument emblazoned with a rising sun behind the mountains, the Pushtunistan emblem. Pushtunistan Day is celebrated

in this square each year on August 31st. The Khyber Restaurant occupies the eastern side of the square, on the ground floor of the Ministry of Finance. It is a popular meeting place in Kabul, especially during the summer when sidewalk tables set under gay umbrellas beckon weary sightseers. The Ariana Cinema next to the restaurant shows foreign pictures in many different languages. The Central Telegraph Office, which also houses a post office, is located on Pushtunistan Square, in the southwest corner.

[1] Leaving Pushtunistan Square, proceed northwest on Ibn Sena Wat passing the Kabul Hotel on your left and on your right the large building of the Bank-i-Milli and the D'Afghanistan Bank. The Bank-i-Milli was the first bank to be established in Afghanistan, in 1933.

[2] On your right at the traffic light, note the large rounded bastions flanking the side gate to the royal palace. Proceed straight ahead through the traffic light. The first building on your right is the old Kabul Cinema, built originally as Amir Abdur Rahman's Salaam Khana-i-Khas or Private Audience Hall. At the end of the 19th century it was a most attractive pillared hall hung with gold damask curtains; today it is marked for demolition. The Lycee Istiklal, an intermediate school for boys founded in 1922 during the reign of King Amanullah, stands next to the cinema. Istiklal was first established as a boarding school in Jebal Seraj.

Now only an hour's drive from Kabul, Jebal Seraj was then a long hard journey by horseback for most of the students, so the school was relocated within the palace grounds. The sprawling buildings built at that time were torn down in 1970 to make way for the tall modern building now in the final stages of completion. Istiklal is co-educational today.

[3] Across from the Lycee Istiklal, on the left, the imposing **Mausoleum of Amir Abdur Rahman** (r. 1880-1901) stands on the edge of Zarnegar (Adorned with Gold) Park. A long inscription beside the main door tells us that this was one of several buildings built in this area by Abdur Rahman when he first came to Kabul as Amir and that it was especially favoured by him as a private palace where he could relax and entertain personal friends away from the formal ceremony of court life in the Arg Palace. Known as the Bustan Serai (Orchard Garden), its gardens, originally laid out in the 15th century by Ulugh Beg, the Emperor Babur's uncle, were famed throughout the country down through the beginning of the 20th century. *Tour directions resume* [10].

[4] In 1902, a year after the Amir was laid to rest here, his son, Amir Habibullah, (r. 1901-1919) held memorial services for his father at the mausoleum to inaugurate repairs on the building. During the next three years much of the original woodwork was replaced by plaster; mud bricks were exchanged for more durable

dark-red burnt bricks; and an upper portion, trimmed with light blue brick and ornately decorated with many small minarets surrounding an iron cupola topped with a golden spire, was added. Since 1964, whitewash of varying hues has covered the original red brick facade. The architectural style is distinctly that of Amir Abdur Rahman and aptly expresses the vigorous personality of one of Afghanistans's most dynamic rulers.

[5] Amir Habibullah also built a small mosque at the mausoleum. The mosque was built for the exclusive use of certain Hafiz, mullahs capable of reciting the Holy Koran from memory who are often to be found in attendance at holy shrines in Afghanistan. There are numbers of them today, for instance, at the mausoleum of Khwaja Abdullah Ansari in Herat. During the reign of King Amanullah the mosque was used by students from the Lycee Istiklal who met for religious education classes in the mausoleum. For some time during King Amanullah's reign the mausoleum also served as Kabul's public library and many rare manuscripts were looted from it after Bacha Saqao's forces took control of the city.

[6] On the other side of the mausoleum there were other palace buildings, the most beautifully decorated of which was called the Zarnegar Palace from which the park takes its name. In this building the Anglo-Afghan Treaty ratifying Afghanistan's fully independent status was signed in November 1921. It then became



the first Ministry of Foreign Affairs and later a part of the Ministry of Education, before being torn down in 1964 to make way for the park.

[7] At the foot of the palace gardens, toward the river, there was another very interesting building originally left standing by the city planners but subsequently demolished. A curious wooden building on stilts, it was the palace storehouse for sweets. Since it represented a colourful phase of court life, a few words about it may not be out of place here, even though it is now gone.

[8] During the reigns of Amir Abdur Rahman and his successors, the distribution of sweets formed an important part of the state ceremonies which took place on national holidays. Each notable who came to pay his respects to the Amir at the Salaam Khana was presented with a bright coloured silk handkerchief filled with a conical brick of sugar, the size dependent upon his rank, and a pound or two of sugared nuts (*shirni*). As great numbers came to these functions and since family festivities in the palace attending engagements and weddings also required similar presentations, the volume of sweets distributed from the palace was considerable and required a large storehouse. Outside the storehouse there was an iron cupola which stood above the scales used for weighing each individual's portion.

[9] Adjoining the Bustan Serai there was another

garden known as the Gulistan Serai (Rose Garden); Bustan and Gulistan being the titles of two popular works by the famous 13th century poet, Sadi. In the Gulistan Serai Amir Abdur Rahman built palaces for his beautiful and vivacious Quenn Halima. Only one of these buildings remains. This, a small square house opposite the Ministry of Education [11], is known as Bobo Jan's, the name by which Queen Halima was familiarly known. Designed by an architect from Bokhara, the facade and woodwork is elaborately decorated with foliated scrolls and birds, motifs frequently found today on bridal silver and jewelry. Other items of historical interest in the park are the tombs of two of King Amanullah's brothers, Hayatullah and Abdul Majid Khan, who were killed during the Bacha Saqao troubles in 1929 and which lie within a marble enclosure embellished with the royal crest; and the tombs of two holy men, one of whom, Muhammad Ibn Ahmad-ul-Hissari (d. 1430), lies beneath a cupola. He was a disciple of Khwaja Nakhshband (1317-1389), the famous mystic and patron saint of Bokhara during the time of Tamerlane.

[10] Continue on Ibn Sena Wat to the next stoplight at Shah Mahmud Ghazi Square, named after King Nadir Shah's youngest brother who served Afghanistan as Prime Minister and Minister of War. The Kabul Public Library is located beside the grove of trees to your

right on Shah Mahmud Ghazi Square. In 1966 the libraries of the Ministry of Information and Culture and the Ministry of Education were combined to form a collection of 100,000 volumes. Many of these are rare volumes in English and other European languages. Though it is not a lending library, interested readers are most welcome. Turn left onto Muhammad Jan Khan Wat. (*Straight ahead to Jadi Wilayat lined with shops selling fur-lined coats called pusteens, jewelry, textiles, antiques and imported goods; the offices of the Governor of Kabul. Right to the Foreign Ministry and Shahr-i-Nau, Tour III.*) Muhammad Jan Khan Wat is named after a patriotic chief from Wardak who led the tribesmen against the British in 1879. Forcing General Roberts to retire behind the walls of the Sherpur cantonments in December, the Afghans under his leadership besieged the British for nine days.

[11] On Muhammad Jan Khan Wat, the new Ministry of Education building with its gleaming facade stands on the right, the downtown petrol station and the Municipality Building on the left. Directly ahead is the village of Deh Afghanan, one of Kabul's most ancient landmarks. Almost all of the 12 bombs dropped during the aerial bombing in 1919 fell in this area killing, it is said, one person and 40 horses. The city planners envision tall modern buildings for Deh Afghanan in the future. The village stands on the slopes of Asmai Heights, Asmai being the name of the Great Mother



Goddess of nature, a very ancient name dating from the Hindu Shahi period. A temple dedicated to this goddess is located in the Asmai Section. The beginning of the Salang Highway to northern Afghanistan was cut through the city at the base of the Asmai Heights in 1969. It branches off to the right just beyond the Ministry of Education.

[12] Rounding the curve on Mohammad Jan Khan Wat one notes many modern stores and small hotels which have sprung up in the last few years to attract the ever-increasing number of visitors to Kabul. At the traffic circle another new street, Asmai Street, has been cut through on the right, between the Plaza and Park Hotels. Turn right. (*The Ministry of Information and Culture which houses the Afghan Tourist Organization on the 1st floor and the Spinzar Hotel, stands just beyond the circle, on the left.*)

[13] Asmai Street will eventually run straight through to the river but for the time being it makes a sharp left to join Sipah Salar Muhammad Nadir Khan Wat where there is a stoplight. The bridge called Pul-i-Shah-do-Shamshira lies directly ahead and a large two-storied mosque stands to the left. This is the **Masjid-i-Shah-do-Shamshira**, the Mosque of the King of Two Swords, which was built by order of King Amanullah's (r. - 1919-1929) mother on the site of one of Kabul's earliest mosques. Hundreds come to this mosque on the 10th of Muharram, the anniversary of the martyrdom of Husain,



grandson of the Prophet Mohammad, son of Ali. In addition, condolence services for prominent Afghans are often held here. In the foyer of the Kabul Museum you may see the plaque carved for the dedication of the mosque in 1544. Across the street from the mosque ibex horns decorate the entrance of the Ziarat-i-Shah-do-Shamshira. Early Islamic sources tell us that in the 7th century when Islam first entered Kabul there was a very important Hindu temple here and even today one of Kabul's most important Hindu temples is located closeby. The Ziarat is dedicated to the memory of an early Islamic commanper who fell here during a fierce battle against the Hindus, fighting heroically with a sword in each hand.

[14] Turn right onto Sipah Salar Muhammad Nadir Khan Wat, named for King Nadir Shah (r. 1929-1933) when he was Commander-in-Chief. In 1929 Nadir Khan made his triumphal entry into Kabul via this road two days after the city had been taken by his brother Sardar Shah Wali Khan. Nadir Khan had crossed over from the Logar Valley into Darulaman.

[15] On your left you pass the present location of the Nejat School for boys. The school will soon shift to ultra modern quarters currently nearing completion on the road to the airport, across from the Ariana Hotel. The Education Press is located next to the school on the left, and the Government Monopolies Building stands across the street from the Press on the

right. A large gateway just beyond the Monopolies leads to the extensive grounds of the government workshops. Established by Amir Abdur Rahman in 1887, these were the first industrial buildings to be built in Kabul and they were known as the Machine Khana (Machine House). During his reign there were many types of factories here including Kabul's first press which was later used to print Kabul's first significant newspaper, the *Seraj-ul-Akhbar*, edited by Mahmud Beg Tarzi, which began publication in 1911. Today only the mint and ammunition factory remain in operation.

[16] While passing the workshops, note a spur behind the buildings of the Avicenna Hospital across the river to the left. cursory excavations here uncovered 60 stucco heads proving this to have been the site of a Buddhist community of the Kushano-Sassanian period of the 3rd-4th centuries. The site is known as Tepe Khazana, Treasure Hill. The straight line of trees that runs along the mountainside marks a *jui* (water canal) built in the 15th century by Ulugh Beg to bring water from the mountains of Gulbagh [49], about ten miles to the southeast, to Bala Hissar. It is still in use today.

[17] During the days of the Moghul Emperors there were beautiful gardens along both sides of the river in this area. In describing his visit to Kabul in 1607, the Emperor Jahangir says: "I perambulated seven of the famous gardens of Kabul. I do not think that I ever walked so far before." In these gardens the court spent

many enjoyable hours, a favorite being the Shahrara Garden laid out by Babur's aunt along the river bank and described by Jahangir as having "all sorts of fruits and grapes, and its softness is such that to put one's sandalled feet upon it would be far from propriety or good manners. There is not a garden like it for sweetness in Kabul."

[18] Babur, Jahangir's great-grandfather and founder of the Moghul Empire, had also been enamoured of this part of Kabul and Jahangir tells us that his ancestor had erected a stone terrace on the slope of a hill above the river "where he used to sit and drink wine. In one corner of this rock they have excavated a round basin which could contain about two mounds of wine..... I have also ordered them to cut out of stone another throne parallel to this and dig another basin of the same fashion on its side, and engrave my name there. Every-day I sat there I ordered them to fill both of the basins with wine....." Jahangir's throne has long since fallen from the hillside but it may still be seen, lying on its side, behind the Avicenna Hospital on the right bank of the river. The wine cup and part of the inscription, including the name of Emperor Jahangir, are still visible.

[19] The consequence of Jahangir's "wine entertainment, sometime with all my intimates and courtiers and sometimes with the ladies of the harem" appear to have been very gay: "One day in the Shahrara Garden on account of the hilarity and excitement, I ordered



those who were of equal age to myself... to jump over the stream that flowed through the middle of the garden... Most of them could not jump it, and fell on the bank or into the stream. Although I jumped it, yet now that I was 40 years of age I could not jump it with the activity that I had shown in the presence of my revered father when I was 30.”

[20] Turn left over the bridge for **Babur’s Garden**. *If you do not wish to visit the Garden, turn right and follow Alternate Route (B), [34], to the Kabul Museum.*

[21] The Pul-i-Arten Bridge spans the Kabul River where it enters the city through the Guzargah (Place of the Pass) Pass between the Sher Darwaza (Lion’s Gate) and Asmai Heights. This bridge was designed by a German architect for King Amanullah whose emblem may be seen on its pillars.

[22] Having crossed the river, turn right and follow the tree-lined road past the Guzargah Bridge on the right and a picturesque shrine gaily painted with bold floral motifs on the left. Take the next left turn after passing the shrine and follow the dirt road up the steep hill to the gateway leading to Bagh-i-Babur Shah or Babur’s Garden.

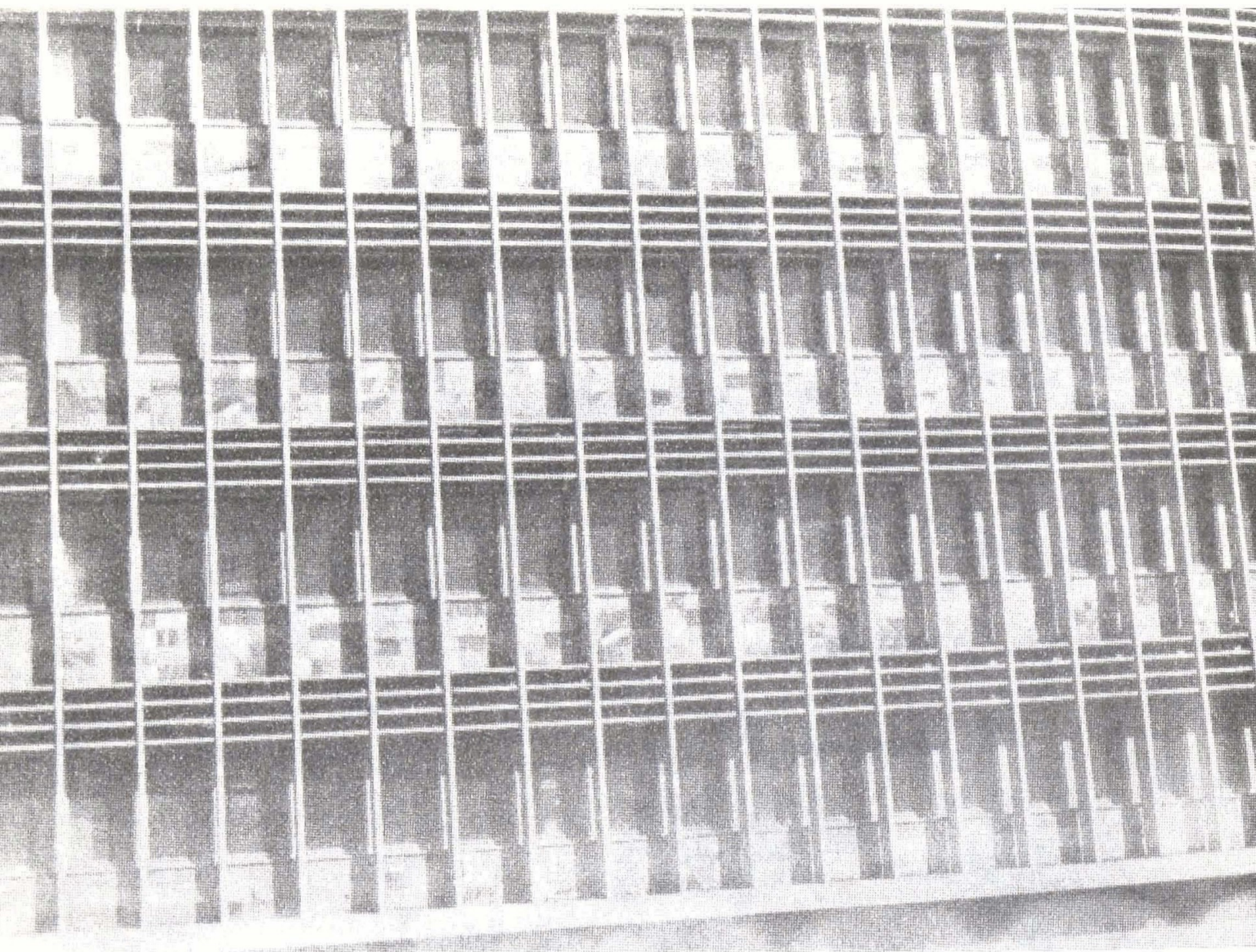
[23] The summer pavilion of Amir Abdur Rahman stands in the garden beneath two magnificent old chinar (plane) trees so beloved by the Moghuls. Walking around the graceful pillared veranda one may look down upon the terraced gardens dotted with fountains. Be sure to





Pushtunistan Square, Kabul Hotel and Amir Abdur Rahman's  
Mausoleum in background; *Afghan Tourist Organization*



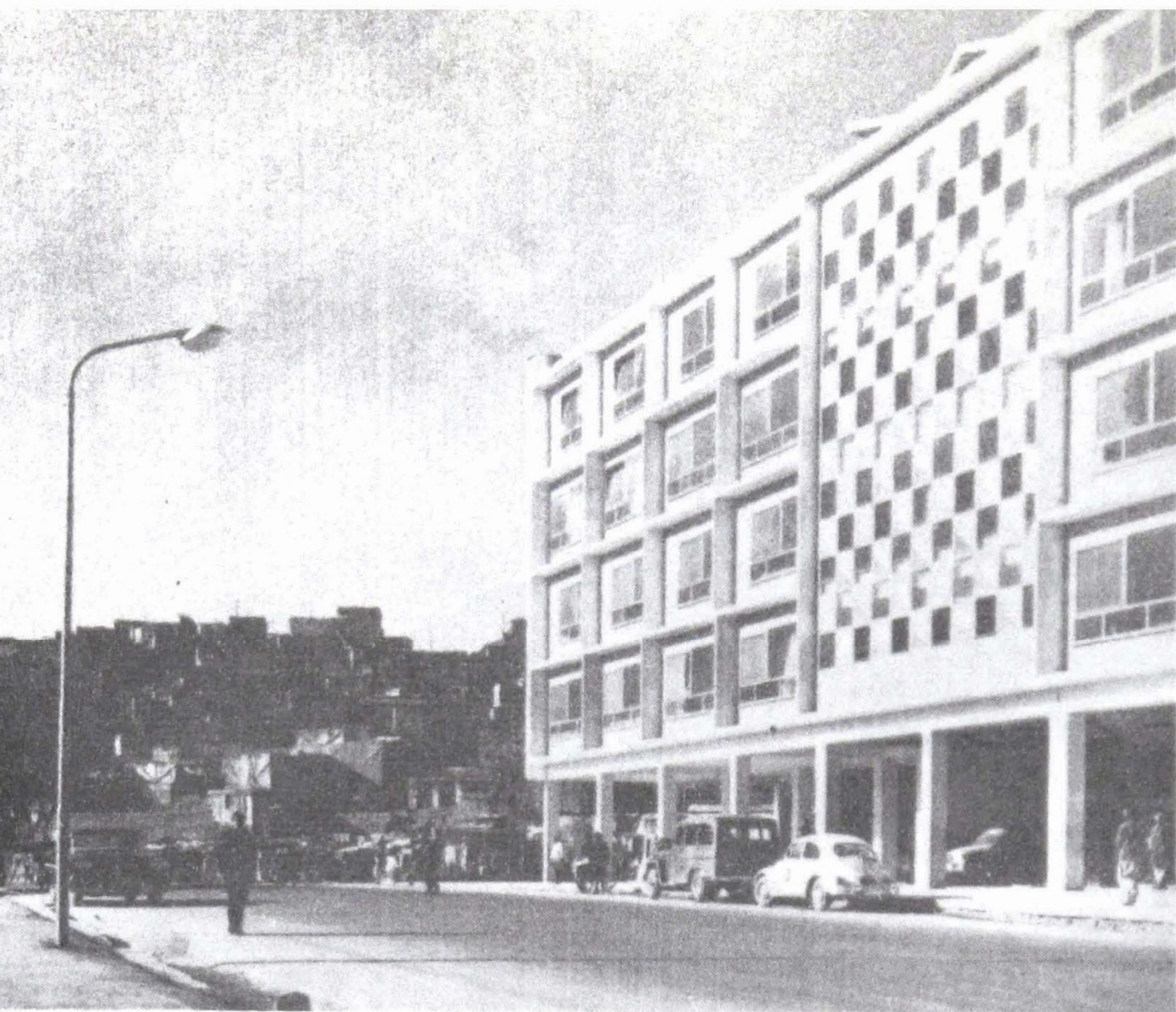


The Modern Face of Kabul; *J. Farrar*

Mausoleum of Amir Abdur Rahman; *L. Dupree*





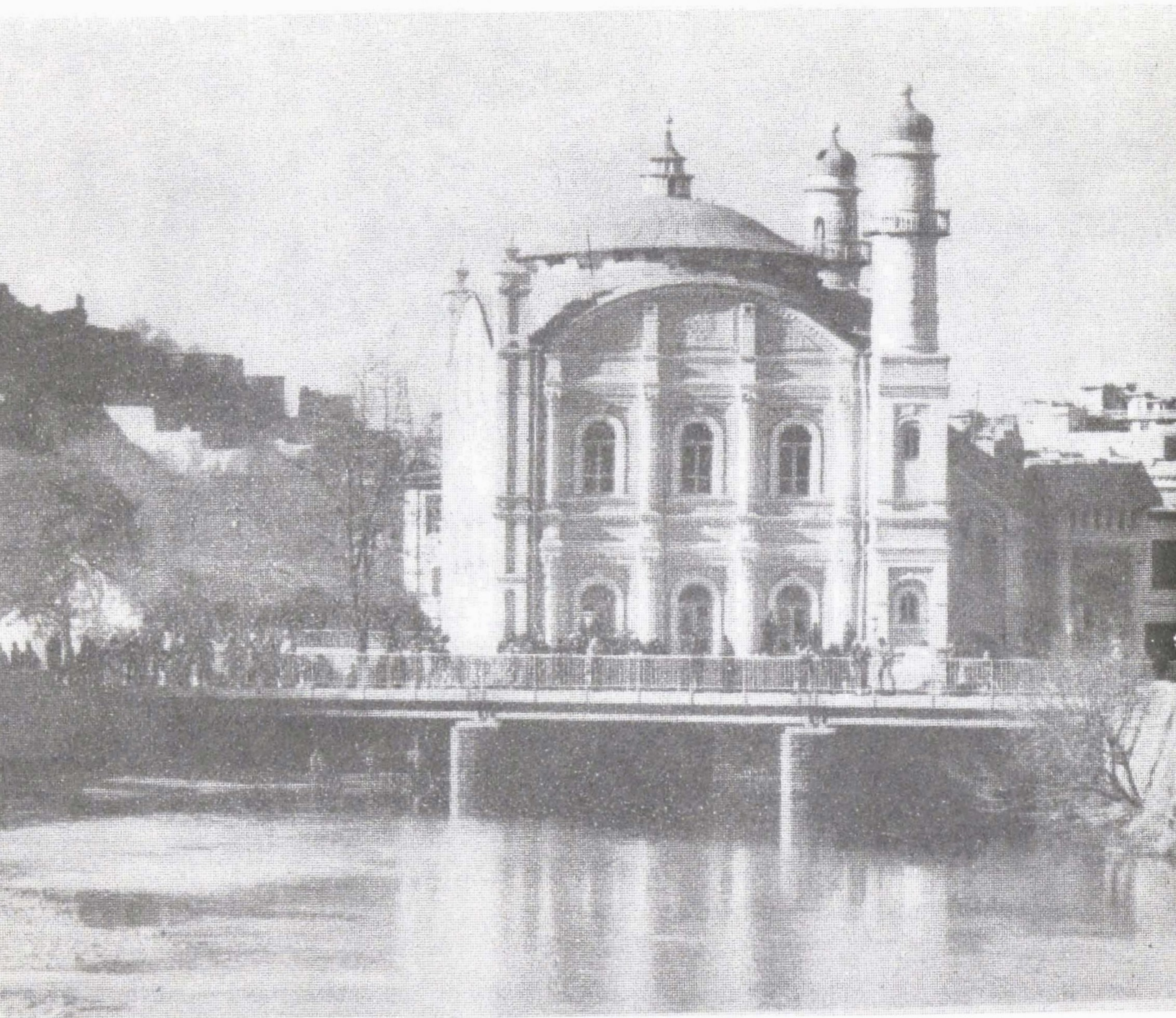


The Ministry of Education; *Afghan Film*

The Spinzar Hotel and Ministry of Information and Culture; *Afghan Film*

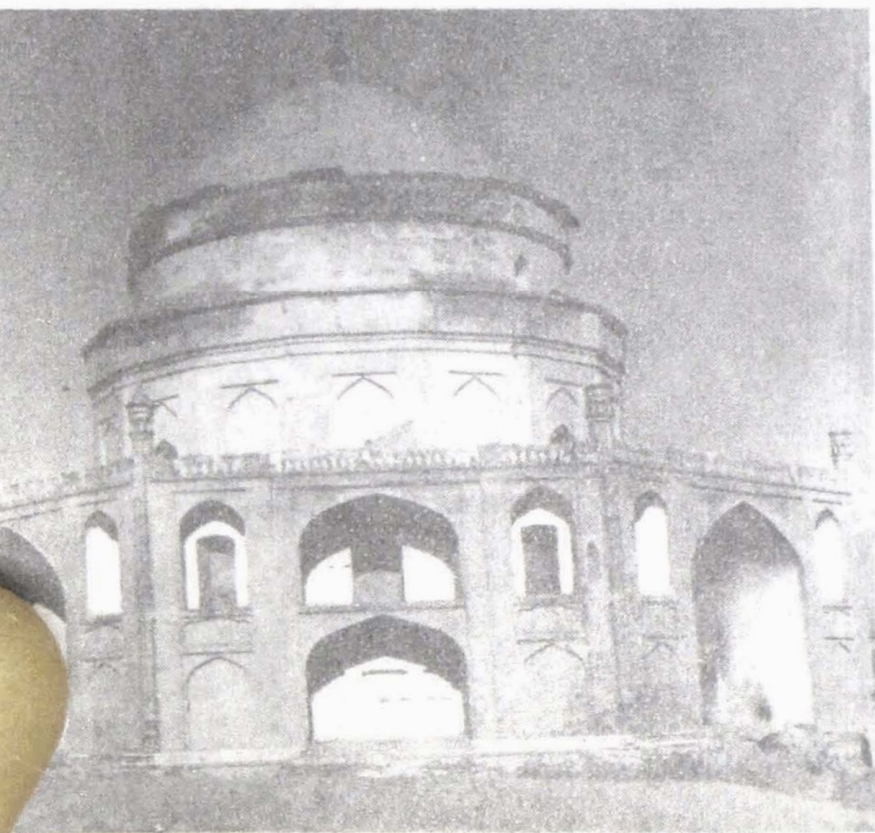




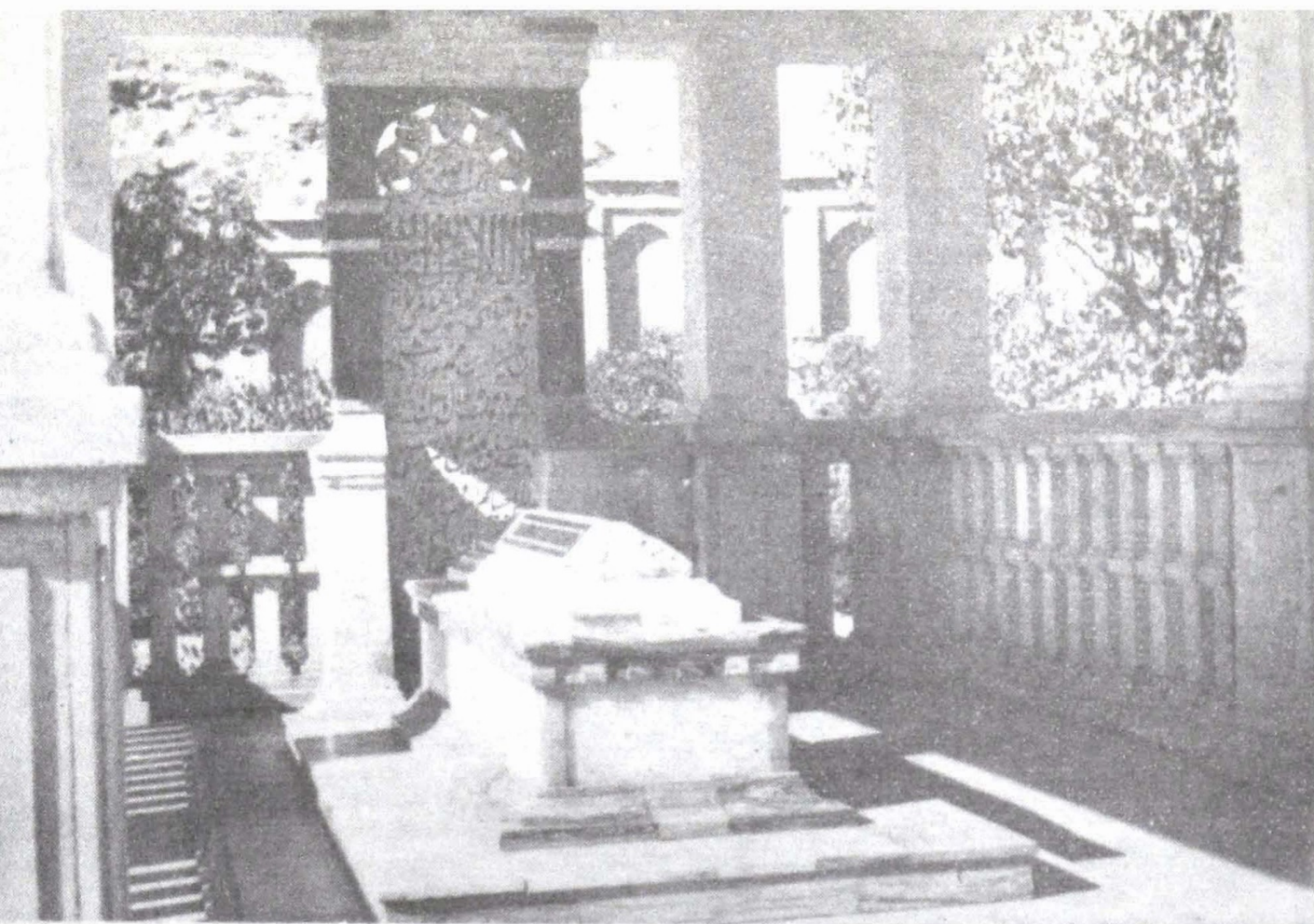


Shah-do-Shamshira Mosque on the bank of the Kabul River; *A. Kirios*

Mausoleum of Timur Shah; *H.E. Klappert*

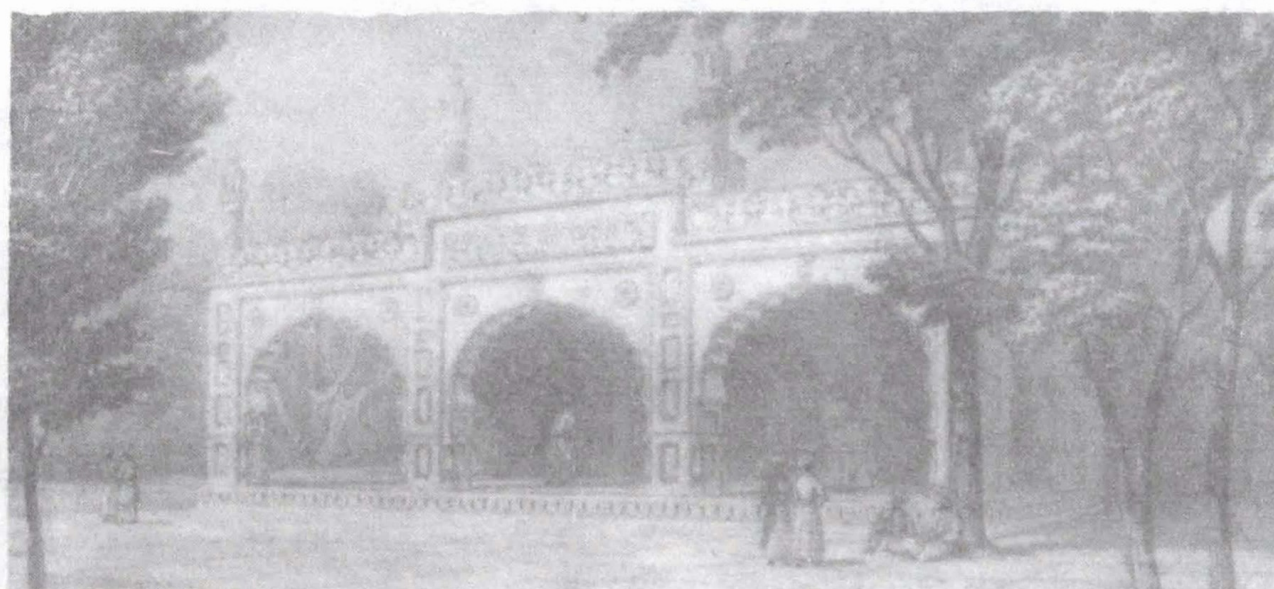




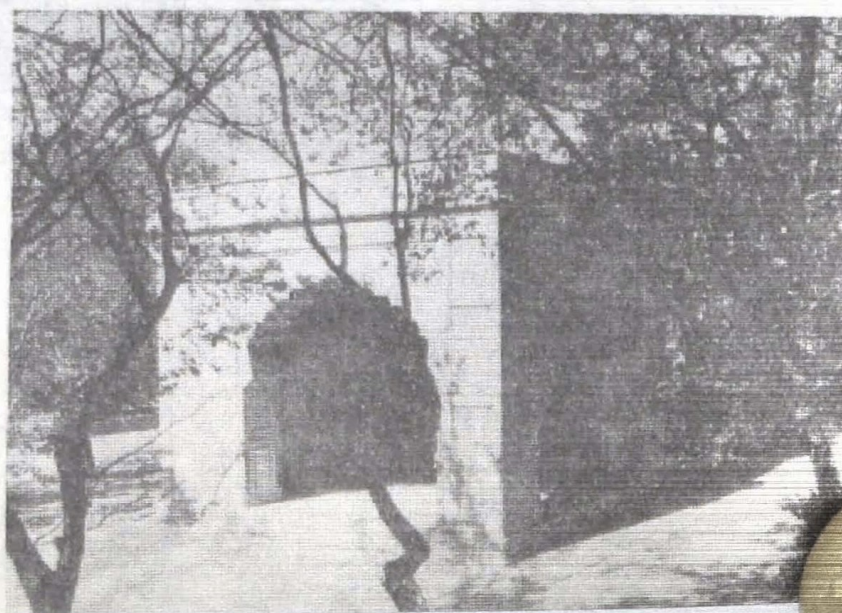


Emperor Babur's Tomb, Babur's Gardens; *H.E. Klappert*

The Shah Jehan Mosque as sketched by Rev. Allen in 1842



Restored Mosque in Babur's Gardens; *A. Kirios*







The Minar-i-Elm-wa-Jahil and ancient city walls; *A.D. Wolfe*





Chilsitoon Palace; *Afghan Film*

Darulaman Palace; *J. Bedford*



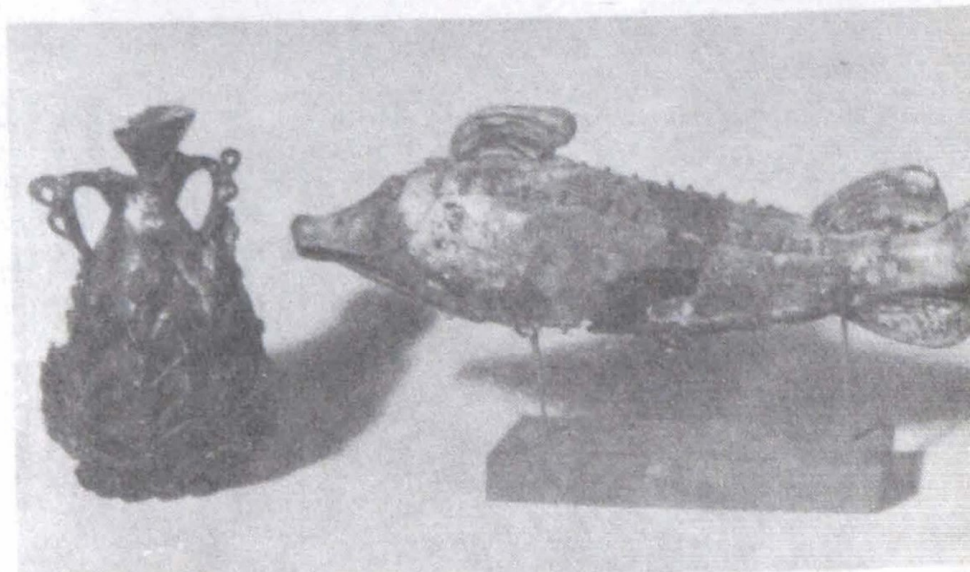




The Begram Treasure from ancient Kapisa, Kabul Museum

*Above:* Ivories from India

*Below:* Glass and Bronze from the Roman Empire; *J. Powell*





note the workmanship of the ceilings on the veranda and in the interior. During the 19th century most of Kabul's fashionable homes were similarly decorated.

[24] Opposite the entrance to the pavilion, stairs lead up the hill past the small elegant mosque, built by the Emperor Shah Jahan in 1646 to celebrate his capture of Balkh. It stood in a deplorable state of disrepair for thirty years after it was partially dismantled preparatory to restoration. Happily, the Italian Archaeological Mission has finally restored it to its former beauty. This work was carried out under the direction of B. C. Bono from 1964-1966. The inscription reads:

“This beautiful mosque and noble place of worship for angels and cherubim was erected in memory of the valiant King Zahir-ad-Din Muhammad Babur by the brave King Abdul Musuffar, Shah Jahanuddin Muhammad Shubab, after the conquest of Balkh and Badakhshan, and the pursuit and flight of Nazar Muhammad Khan from Balkh to Subzghan, and the subsequent defeat of his army, and finished in two years, at an expense of 40,000 rupees, in the nineteenth year of his reign, and in the year 1056 of the Hijra (1646).”

[25] On the terrace above the mosque we come to the tomb of the founder of the Moghul Dynasty of

India, Babur Shah; a most modest structure in comparison to the elaborate edifices built by his descendants in India. The present appearance of the Emperor's tomb is the result of extensive repairs carried out during the reign of King Nadir Shah (1929-1933). The inscribed head-stone is a copy of the original tablet set here by the Emperor Jahangir in 1607. It reads:

Asking from whose brow shone the light of God,  
It was Zahir-ad-Din Muhammad Babur Badshah:

With splendour, wealth, good fortune, justice and probity, He commanded a force composed of the Divine and Faithful, Youthful, Graceful, Victorious and Triumphant.

He seized the world of bodies and became bright souled, For the conquest of the world of souls he became like the light of an eye.

When Paradise became his dwelling, Rizwan (the doorkeeper of heaven) demanded of me a chronogram.

I replied: Paradise is forever the abode of Babur Badshah.

Another inscription above this one describes the modern repairs.

[26] On either side of the Emperor's tomb there are others belonging to members of his family. On the



right is the tomb of his younger son, Mirza Hindal, who was killed in Nanrahar when fighting there on behalf of his brother Kamran, then ruling at Kabul, against their brother Humayun, subsequently Emperor at Delhi. Beside him lies Hakim Mirza, one of Humayun's sons who was born in the Bala Hissar and died there at the age of 32 in 1585. The marble tablets at the head of these two tombs are the originals placed here by Emperor Jahangir. The tomb to the left is of much later date, 1787, and is that of the daughter of Alamgir II, a Moghul puppet king of Delhi. The single tomb on the uppermost terrace is that of Babur's grand-daughter, the daughter of Mirza Hindal.

[27] Early 19<sup>th</sup> century accounts present us with a more elegant picture. The whole group of graves was then enclosed by a white marble screen "curiously and elegantly carved" in the manner of those at the Taj Mahal and a "rippling stream came purling down" from the *jui* above, falling in "cascades over the descenders of the several terraces" by the side of the stairway lined with stately cypress trees. Magnificent stands of chinar trees shaded reservoirs situated behind the mosque and above the tombs and a profusion of sweet smelling wild rose, jasmine and other fragrant shrubs covered the mountain side.

[28] On leaving the gardens, note the large building to the left of the gateway. Once the Queen's elegant summer villa and then the first German Embassy, it is

now a school for tribal children.

[29] Behind these walls one may attend dog fights staged between huge fierce dogs especially trained for this purpose. They are held on Friday mornings on the hillside behind the gardens. The road to the noon gun also runs up the hill behind these walls. This gun booms forth at twelve everyday and it also announces the beginning and end of the fast during the month of Ramazan, the month of fasting observed throughout the Islamic world. There is a motorable road up to the gun platform, but it is hazardous and one should proceed with caution, preferably in a small car. The view is magnificent. The guns, there are two, are said to have been manufactured in the Machine Khana (see [15]) during the reign of Amir Abdur Rahman (r. 1880-1901) when they were also used for capital punishment.

[30] On returning to the main road at the foot of the hill you may proceed to the Kabul Museum by either of two alternate routes: (A) via Chilsitoun Gardens, [31]; (B) via Jadi Darulaman, [34].

[31] *Alternate Route (A).* Turn left and continue past the Jangalak Factories established in 1961. Jangalak manufactures agricultural implements, vehicle bodies, furniture, ceramics, and textiles. The paved road continues to the gates of Chilsitoun (Forty Pillars) Palace with its beautiful spacious gardens. Originally built by Amir Abdur Rahman, it was given to Prince Habibullah as a private estate. An English doctor

resident in Kabul during those days describes its “appearance of a Greek temple with pillars around it” which accounts for its name. The Durand Mission under Sir Mortimer Durand, charged with the settlement of the borders between Afghanistan and British India, were housed in this palace on their arrival in October, 1893. One member was most impressed by his “lordly bed upholstered in gold brocade and blue satin.”

[32] The present palatial building, which incorporates part of the original, was built by His Majesty King Zahir Shah and serves as the house for important state visitors. Though the interior is not open to the public, it is possible to view the gardens and the beautiful Chahrdeh Valley from the terrace. Ask permission from the guards at the side gate.

[33] The road to Darulaman turns to the right side of the Palace and meanders through fields, past villages and poplar groves until it meets the tree-lined road to Rishkhor and Gulbagh [49]. Turn right. At the fork, turn left to the Kabul Museum buildings on the right. *Kabul Museum*. [42].

[34] *Alternate Route (B)*. Turn right after descending from Babur’s Garden and return to Pul-i-Arten Bridge. Cross it and follow the road as it curves to the left, past the petrol station and on to the Abdul Wakil Khan Monument [37]. On the way note another monument standing high above the road on your left. This is the **Minar-i-Elm-wa-Jahil**, the Column to Knowledge and Ignorance,



erected by King Amanullah following the rebellion (March 1924-January 1925) of the southern provinces around Khost. The names of those who fell are inscribed on the face of the rock below the monument, beside the rustic bridge.

[35] The inscription on the monument states that this column was erected so that coming generations may remember those who sacrificed their lives in the heroic struggle of knowledge against reactionary ignorance. There are several interesting emblems on this theme carved onto the sides of the column. On the eastern face, for instance, there is a book, a pen and an inkpot above crossed swords signifying the fight for education. The emblem, known as the Nishan-i-Maaref, was worn by all students in Kabul during King Amanullah's reign. The monument is set among huge boulders beside the Kabul River.

[36] The Kabul Zoo is situated next to this minar, on the bank of the river.

Summer Hours:	8 a.m.-7 p.m.
Winter Hours:	9 a.m.-5 p.m.
Admission:	Adults 10 afs; children 5 afs.
Camera Fee:	20 afs.

Free on Friday

The zoo houses many of Afghanistan's animals and birds and some foreign animals are also represented, sent by the Cologne Zoo, Kabul Zoo's sister zoo. Many of the animals live outdoors in open, natural settings.

An outdoor aquarium is being constructed, and an animal museum has recently opened where there are many varieties of birds on display. New sections devoted to mammals and insects will be added.

[37] The **Minar-i-Abdul Wakil Khan** stands in the center of Deh Mazang Circle, at the stoplight in front of the zoo. It was erected by King Nadir Shah to the memory of this Nuristani general who was killed in the Koh Daman while fighting against followers of Bacha Saqao. On the right, the houses of Deh Mazang cling to the steep slopes of Asmai above the Kabul Traffic offices standing in front of Deh Mazang Prison. Each year new houses are added, rising further and further toward the summit, from which spectacular views of the Chahrdeh Valley reward one for the arduous ascent.

[38] Turn left around the monument (*straight ahead on Jadi Mir Wais to Kabul University, Tour III, [30], and Paghman*) onto Jadi Darulaman, a broad tree-lined avenue laid out by King Amanullah when he was building his new city during the 1920s. During his time trolley cars ran along its entire length from the heart of the new city to the Shah-do-Shamshira Mosque.

[39] Just after turning onto Jadi Darulaman the ancient walls of Kabul may be seen most advantageously to your left as they descend Sher Darwaza to the Guzergah Pass. The platform on which the noon gun stands is also clearly visible from here.

[40] On Jadi Darulaman you pass the Hajari Najari



(Lapidary-Joinery) marble factory where both marble and lapis lazuli may be purchased. Further ahead just after crossing the bridge spanning the Chamchamast River, a tributary of the Kabul River which divides the residential sections of Karte Chahr (Section Four) and Karte Seh (Section Three), you will note a large modern building on the left. This is Habibya College, Kabul's first highschool for boys founded by Amir Habibullah in 1903. The school moved to these new quarters in June, 1964, having been previously located next to Timur Shah's mausoleum in the buildings now occupied by the Aisha Durrani girl's school, Tour I, [56]. The large building of the Ministry of Commerce followed by that of the National Assembly next appear on the right; the Soviet Embassy compound on the left; the Malaria Institute on the right. In spite of all these encroachments by ever-expanding Kabul, this valley of Chahrdeh (Four Villages) retains much of its original pastoral beauty. Picturesque walled castles, cultivated fields, poplar groves and herds of sheep and goats alternate with the city architecture, especially toward the end of the 4-mile long avenue leading to the heart of Darulaman (City of Amanullah) which King Amanullah (r. 1919-1929) planned as his new capital city.

[41] Both Amir Abdur Rahman and Amir Habibullah thought of building a new city here but no move was made until King Amanullah started his ambitious project. As you approach **Darulaman** you will notice



an impressive castle on a hill in the middle of a luxurious park straight ahead of you. This was built by King Amanullah for the Parliament and Secretariat and was designed for him by M. Goddard, an architect with the first DAFA mission to Afghanistan. It was, however, never used for its intended purpose. It was last occupied by the Ministry of Public Works until 1968 when a fire burned out the upper stories. It is now being restored. What its future will be is open to conjecture.

[42] Turn right at the fork to the **Kabul Museum**, on your right.

Summer Hours:	21 March-23 September
8-12 a.m.	1:30-4:30 p.m.

Thursday and Friday: 8 a.m.-12 p.m.

Winter Hours:	24 September-20 March
9-12 a.m.	1:30-3:30 p.m.

Thursday and Friday: 9 a.m.-1 p.m.

Ramazan: 8 a.m.-1 p.m. Saturday through Thursday

Admission: 5 afs; free on Friday

A Museum Guide is available. The museum is not heated and visitors are urged to dress warmly during the winter.

[43] Amir Habibullah was interested in the rare and unusual items acquired by the royal family and several of the western residents in Kabul during his time tell with interest of visiting storerooms he had especially set aside for this collection. His brother, Prince Nasrullah, was a discriminating collector of

fine manuscripts.

[44] When King Amanullah came to power he placed both these collections in the Bagh-i-Bala for a short time but subsequently brought them back into the city. The rare objects were then placed in the Baghcha (Little Garden) Palace within the Arg grounds. After 1922 when a contract was signed with the Delegation Archeologique Francaise en Afghanistan (DAFA), this collection was augmented by the addition of examples from Afghanistan's early cultures. The manuscript collection was, however, placed in the lower rooms of Amir Abdur Rahman's Mausoleum where it was known as the Kitab Khana-i-Milli (National Library) which was open to the public. During the troubled times of Bacha Saqao in 1929 many of the fine manuscripts disappeared. After peace was restored, therefore, King Nadir Shah moved both collections to the safety of the present museum building which Amir Amanullah had intended to be the Municipality Building for his new capital.

[45] A reorganization programme was initiated in 1957 and in 1958 with the assistance of UNESCO. Under this programme both the Begram Room and the Islamic Arts Room were reorganized according to modern museum techniques.

[46] A Guide to the Kabul Museum describes the collection, so it is only necessary here to urge the hurried visitor not to miss the exciting Begram Collection from

the Kushan capital at Kapisa. The ivories and painted Roman glass are unique. The Museum also has beautifully preserved frescoes from the Bamiyan Valley, Buddhist art from various sites in Afghanistan, an excellent collection of coins, interesting Islamic objects from Ghazni and Kabul, an extremely fascinating ethnographic collection, and a collection of early Afghan arms. The exquisite manuscript collection has been moved to the fifth floor of the Ministry of Information and Culture. (*above*, [12]).

[47] Large ornate villas surrounded by lush gardens were built by members of the aristocracy in the area behind the museum building. The building directly behind the museum was the home of King Amanullah's Foreign Minister, Mahmud Beg Tarzi, father of the Queen, Souriya and editor of the famed newspaper *Seraj-ul-Akhbar*. It is now the Lycee Mahmud Tarzi. The large grey and white building to the left of the Lycee, now the Afghan Institute of Archaeology, was once the home of King Amanullah's sister. It was restored in 1959.

[48] From the Museum follow the paved road around the gardens, past the trolley cars still standing before their little station. Just beyond the trolley station you may be able to catch a glimpse of a lovely palace up on the hillside. This is Tepe Taj Beg which was to have been King Amanullah's new palace but he never saw it completed. The interior was richly



decorated with beautiful Afghan marbles inlaid with lapis lazuli. On their European tour the royal couple purchased exquisite furnishings for this palace, some of which remain in its storerooms today. The exterior is tastefully decorated with the personal emblems of the King of Afghanistan. Used as a hospital by the Ministry of Public Works until April, 1964, it is now the headquarters of the Kabul Central Forces. No visitors allowed.

[49] Follow the paved road which winds to the left. If you have time and are interested in a short but very lovely introduction to the Afghan countryside, you may turn right to **Rishkhor** and **Gulbagh**. The road is unpaved, dusty in summer, muddy in spring. About three miles and 15 minutes from Darulaman you come to a bridge in the area of the village of Rishkhor. Cross the bridge and turn right. This will bring you to the public gardens of Gulbagh where you may picnic in perfectly delightful surroundings on the banks of the river. Turning left at the bridge, one may proceed for another mile before coming to a military area where entrance is forbidden. On a hill top to the right you may, however, see a large palace built by the late Sarder Shah Mahmud Ghazi. The beautiful gardens and orchards which surround this palace were laid out by the Sardar and to it he brought seeds and saplings gathered on his expansive travels throughout the world: These gardens are amongst the loveliest in Kabul.

[50] To return to Kabul without visiting Rishkhor, continue left and proceed to the two pillars marking the entrance to Jadi Darulaman. *Those who have taken Alternate Route (A), see 41-45.* Return to Deh Mazang Circle, turn right, and continue past the petrol station to Pul-i-Arten. Cross it and turn left. On your right is Avicenna Hospital named for the famous 11th century philosopher and physician Abu Ali al-Husain Ibn Abdullah Ibn Sena. You next pass the Chandawal Section, site of a Qizilbash garrison of Nadir Shah's time (r. 1738-1747). In the early 19th century it was still inhabited by the Qizilbash and was a separate fortified suburb just outside the limits of the city of Kabul. Today its inhabitants are still predominately Shia and the name Chandawal, meaning rear-guard, links the present with the past.

[51] At the stop light at the end of Jadi Maiwand you may follow either of two routes: (A) straight ahead on Jadi Maiwand to the Maiwand Monument, left across Pul-i-Khishti to Pushtunistan Square [52]; (B) left along the side of the river past Timur Shah's Mausoleum to Pul-i-Shahi [54].

[52] *Route (A)* takes you past the large Ladies' Hospital, the Shefa Khana Masturat, on your left; the first street on your right leads to the buria bazaar where all manner of baskets and matting may be purchased and one of the city's busiest and most colorful second - hand bazaars specializing in yarn goods and shoes. Further ahead

a wide paved street on the left leads to the Mandawi Bazaar, the wholesale grain market, where rice, lentils, eggs, etc. may be purchased. Numerous textile shops and several photographic shops line this section of Jadi Maiwand and as you approach the monument you will note several shops hung with garlands of paper flowers on your right. These delicate paper decorations are used for engagement and wedding festivities. Cars festooned with them may often be seen on the streets of Katul, carrying the bride and groom to the wedding ceremony. A small sidestreet beside these shops leads to the Kitab Firoshi (*Book Market*) and to Khwaja Safa, Tour V. [10]. In the side street across the avenue from the paper flower shops you will find many shops offering *gilim* (woven rugs) for sale. *Gilim* designs are bright and bold, a speciality of the Hazara from Central Afghanistan and the Uzbek from Northern Afghanistan.

[53] Turn left around the monument commemorating the Afghan victory over the British forces at Maiwand near Qandahar on 27 July, 1880 onto Nadir Pushtun Wat which takes you past the historic Chahr Chatta Bazaar, the Pul-i-Khishti Mosque and a bridge called Pul-i-Khishti to Pushtunistan Square, a route described in Tour II.

[54] For *Route B* turn left at the stop light and continue down the right bank of the river on Timur Shah Wat past a long line of shops selling karakul skins for which



**Afghanistan is justly famous. (one way traffic).**

**[55] The Mausoleum of Timur Shah (d.1793) stands in a garden at the end of this line of shops. The mausoleum is a massive octagonal structure built in the style of the early Moghul and Afghan kings of Delhi. The exterior of the base is ornamented with deeply recessed arched niches and with small cupolas on each of the eight corners. Above this there is a drum ornamented with shallow niches and a second drum topped by a dome. Unfortunate modifications currently in progress have destroyed the design of the exterior and barr visitors from the large open chamber which contains a plain undecorated sarcophagus. The actual tomb lies in the subterranean vaults which are now also locked. Beside it there are two other tombs, one of which is reputed to be that of the ill-fated Shah Shujah, a son of Timur Shah who was murdered outside the Bala Hissar in April, 1842.**

**[56] Proceed past the Aisha Durrani School to the Pul-i-Shahi (Kings Bridge). You may follow one of the following three alternate routes.**

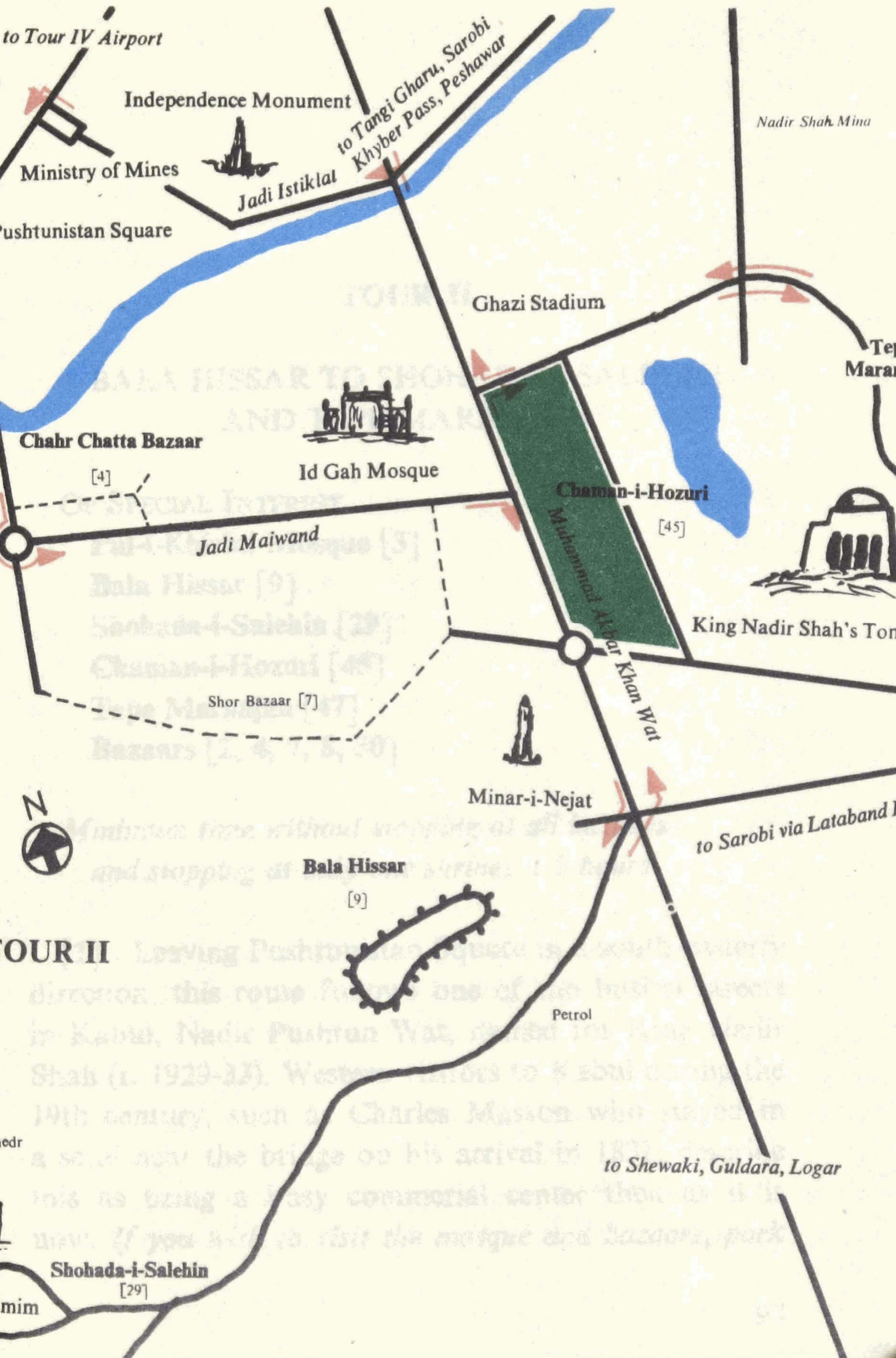
**[57] (i) Turn left over Pul - i - Shahi and return to Pushtunistan Square.**

**[58] (ii) Continue straight down the right bank of the river passing the Central Post Office, and several jewelry shops where lapis lazuli may be purchased, to Pul-i-Khishti. The moneychanger's serai, Shahzada Serai, is located about half-way down this street popularly called**

Lab-i-Darya or River's Bank, across from a new footbridge completed in 1970. At the foot of this street is Pul-i-Khishti Mosque on your right, and the Pul-i-Khishti Bridge on the left. Cross this bridge and continue straight ahead to Pushtunistan Square.

[59] (iii) Turn right into Bagh-i-Umomi (Public Gardens). Less than fifty years ago the whole area by the river from Chandawal to the Arg Palace was laid out in spacious gardens and this bustling busy street retains the name of one of them. The Ministry of Press Bookstore which carries English language periodicals and books is on the left at the beginning of this street lined with small shops selling all manner of textiles: shoes, ladies' wear, and sundries. At the end, there are several large colourful serais, two-storied buildings around a central courtyard, where one may purchase such items as embroidery cotton, ribbons, chiffon scarfs and other sundries. The street here is very crowded but you may if you wish turn to the left passing many shops selling the dried fruits for which Afghanistan has been famous for centuries. This will bring you back to the road by the river, turn right to Pul-i-Khishti, left over the bridge and return to Pushtunistan Square. If you do not wish to drive through this short but crowded street return to Pul-i-Shahi and take route (A) or (B).









## **TOUR II**

### **BALA HISSAR TO SHOHADA-I-SALEHIN AND TEPE MARANJAN**

#### **OF SPECIAL INTEREST**

**Pul-i-Khishti Mosque [3]**

**Bala Hissar [9]**

**Shohada-i-Salehin [29]**

**Chaman-i-Hozuri [45]**

**Tepe Maranjan [47]**

**Bazaars [2, 4, 7, 8, 50]**

*Minimum time without stopping at all bazaars  
and stopping at only one shrine: 1.5 hours*

[1] Leaving Pushtunistan Square in a south-easterly direction, this route follows one of the busiest streets in Kabul, Nadir Pushtun Wat, named for King Nadir Shah (r. 1929-33). Western visitors to Kabul during the 19th century, such as Charles Masson who stayed in a serai near the bridge on his arrival in 1831, describe this as being a busy commercial center then as it is now. *If you wish to visit the mosque and bazaars, park*

*your can before passing the bridge, or on the circle on Jadi Maiwand from where the tour continues, [6].*

[2] To the left before crossing the city's oldest bridge (recently rebuilt) called Pul-i-Khishti (Brick Bridge), you find one of the city's most interesting **silver bazaars** where the small shops beside the river are festooned with necklaces, bracelets, earrings and amulets. It is best to visit this bazaar on foot. Along the road to the right before crossing the bridge, you may buy *chapans* (long cloaks with overly long sleeves made of silk or cotton which come from the northern provinces) and embroidered Uzbek caps. A foot bridge over the Kabul River built in 1970 enables one to cross over and visit the **goldsmiths' shops** on the other side of the river in the vicinity of the Shahzada Serai where most of Kabul's moneychangers are located. Fine quality lapis lazuli may also be purchased here.

[3] The **Pul-i-Khishti Mosque**, Kabul's newest large mosque, stands on the right beyond the bridge. The small mosque erected by Shah Zaman (r. 1793-1800) on this site has been incorporated into the section which fronts on Nadir Pashtun Wat. The tiles used to decorate this mosque, and the flanking line of two-storied shops behind it also built in 1964, were made in Kabul under the supervision of a master tile-maker from the mosque workshop in Herat.

[4] Beyond the Mosque a narrow street runs to the left. This is the site of the famed **Chahr Chatta** (Four



Arcades) covered bazaar built in the 17th century by Governor Ali Mardan Khan who was renowned for his beautification of the city. He also created the famed Shalimar Gardens for the Emperor Shah Jahan where he is buried. It took twelve years to build the Chahr Chatta where the walls were gayly decorated with floriated gypsum studded with mirrors and whitewashed with a special solution containing bits of mica to make them sparkle. Six-hundred feet long, the bazaar consisted of four covered arcades linked by open octagonal courtyards centered with fountains. It was the principle section of a main street which ran through to the Darwaza Lahori at the foot of the Bala Hissar. A rather macabre story accounts for Ali Mardan's great wealth which enabled him to build with such magnificence. Falling unaccountably ill, he discovered he was married to a malevolent fairy whereupon he pushed her into an oven where she turned into a stone which turned all metals into gold. Word of this soon reached the ears of the Moghul King of Delhi who demanded that Ali Mardan present him with the stone. Dutifully presenting himself at court, he asked only that all the people of Delhi should meet him on the banks of the Jumna River, bringing with them all the pots and pans they could carry. For days he demonstrated the miracle of the stone, mountains of golden vessels glittered in the sun, but when the time came to hand over the precious stone, Ali Mardan casually tossed it into the river. For days

teams of elephants dragged the river with huge chains. The chains turned into gold, but the stone was never seen again. The story does not venture to comment on what happened to Ali Mardan Khan!

[5] The Chahr Chatta was still the principle bazaar of Kabul in the 19th century and many Western accounts describe its bustle and decoration. It was completely destroyed, however, by order of General Pollock on the 10th October, 1842 in reprisal for the annihilation of the British forces in January of that same year. The Chahr Chatta was thought to be a particularly fitting site to bear the mark of reprisal because it was here that Envoy Macnaghten's dismembered body was displayed. In 1880 one witness reports that the fountains and water ducts were still choked up with the debris left by General Pollock's act but that the shops were once again open for business. In 1905 a resident of Kabul writes again of this "most magnificent bazaar of four covered arcades separated by open squares with wells and fountains, the walls embellished with paintings." The Municipality has recently shorn it of its roof, but the four squares are still recognizable. It is still one of the busiest and most colourful bazaars in Kabul and most worth a visit. Turban silks, Qandahari embroidery, beaded hats, silver and various textiles are here offered for sale. *Visit only on foot; boots recommended after rain or snow.* The residential section around the bazaar still bears the name of Ali Mardan Khan. The gardens of Ali

Mardan Khan which were laid out by the river which many senior citizens of Kabul recall with fondness have, however, given away completely to the city.

[6] Continue on Nadir Pushtun Wat to the large monument standing in the center of the broad avenue known as Jadi Maiwand. This monument, **Minar-i-Maiwand**, commemorates the battle fought between the British under General Burrows and the Afghans under Sardar Ayub Khan, at Maiwand, 45 miles from Qandahar, on 27 July, 1880. The inscription is taken from a Pushtu poem which recounts how the Afghans, heavily outnumbered, were preparing for retreat when a young girl named Malalai, only that day a bride, came forward to entreat the soldiers thus: "If you do not taste of martyrdom today on this field of Maiwand, By God I am afraid you'll lead an ignominious life forever more." Upon hearing this, the soldiers turned back to win the battle. The column was erected by His Majesty King Zahir Shah in 1959.

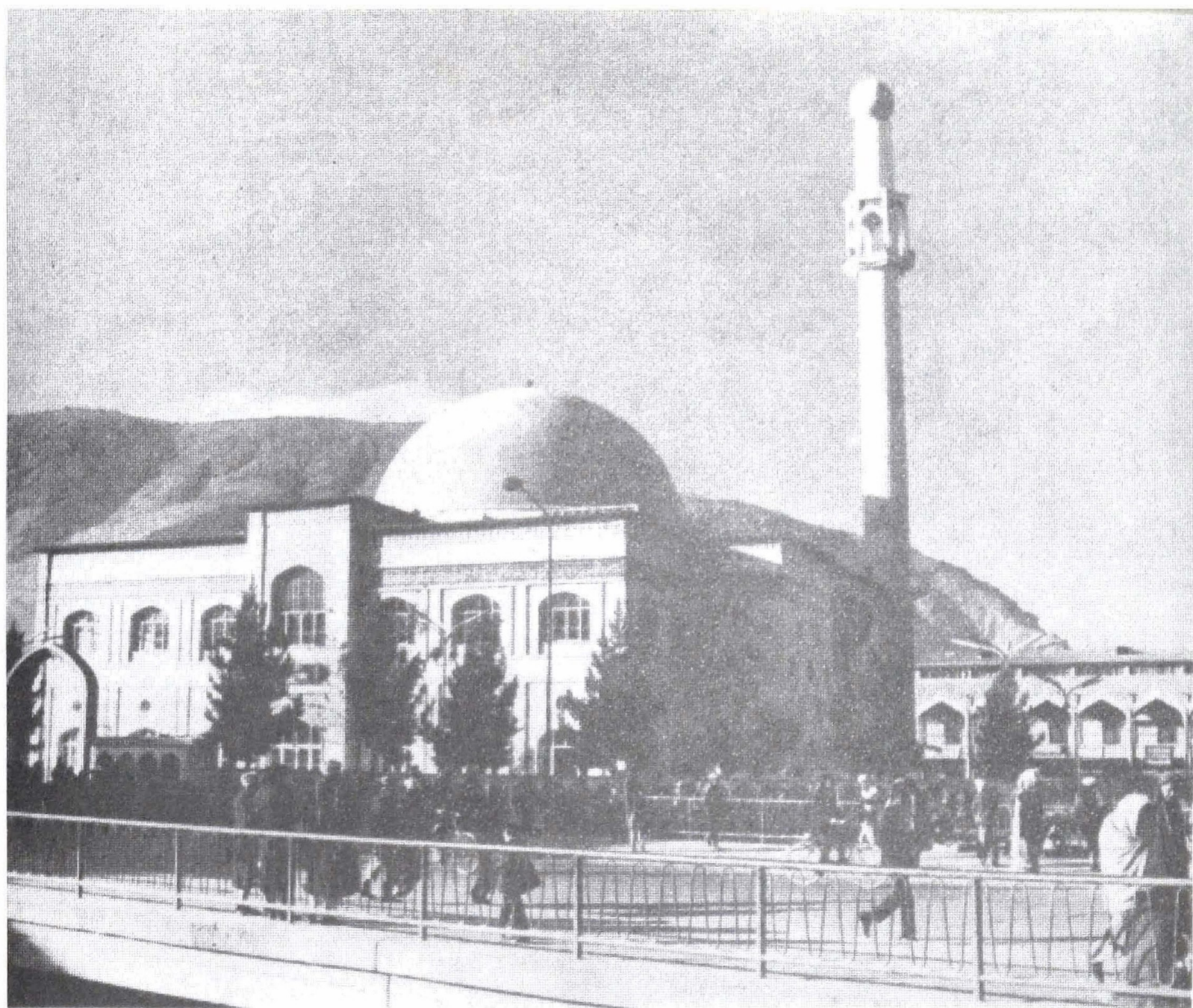
[7] Turning to the left, (*Nadir Pushtun Wat continues straight ahead to the entrance to Shor Bazaar*) one passes the copper bazaar on your right where artisans may be seen hammering out copper vessels of varied shapes. Follow Jadi Maiwand to its eastern limit. The old city of Kabul with its narrow twisting lanes lies behind the facade of two storied buildings built after Jadi Maiwand was bulldozed through its center in 1949. **Shor Bazaar**, the old city's most famous street, runs paralld to Jadi



Maiwand on the east (right). It cuts straight through the foot of Bala-Hissar at Lahori Bazaar and it is motorable although tight encounters with various four-legged and two-wheeled traffic are frequent. The best buys in kites are to be made in Shor Bazaar and since a large Hindu community lives here, many exotic spices not available elsewhere in Kabul may also be purchased here. Historically, the name of Shor Bazaar flashed across the ocean when Sir Alexander Burnes and his companions, including a younger brother, were killed in his Shor Bazaar residence on 2 November, 1841. The city plan for Kabul calls for this area to be razed within the next 25 years.

[8] Turn right at the end of Jadi Maiwand onto Muhammad Akbar Khan Wat, named after Amir Dost Muhammad Khan's son, a prominent figure during the First Anglo-Afghan War (1838-1842). This street became the **rug bazaar** in 1964, replacing the old serai torn down to make way for Zarnegar Park. Continue to the **Minar-i-Nejat** (Salvation Column) commemorating the entrance of General Nadir Khan, later King Nadir Shah, into Kabul in 1929 to end Bacha Saqao's occupation of the city. A gift from the people of Kabul to King Nadir Shah, the column stands at the eastern entrance to the Lahori Bazaar where one of the seven gates of Kabul, the Lahori Gate, also indentified with the Currier's Gate mentioned by the Emperor Babur, stood until it was demolished in 1930. It was the last of the seven



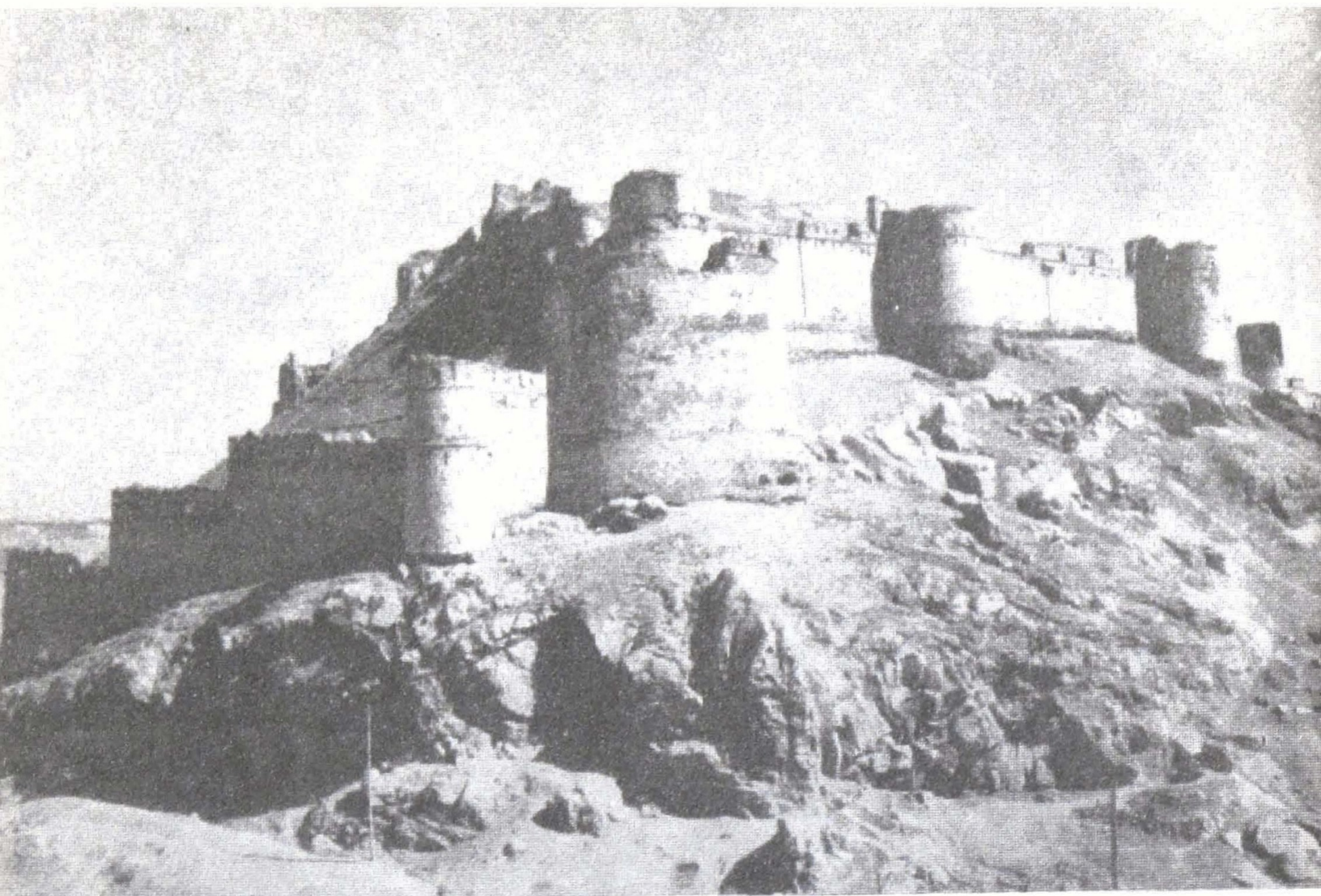


Pul-i-Khisti Mosque; *A. Kirios*

Maiwand Memorial Column, Jami Maiwand; *Afghan Film*

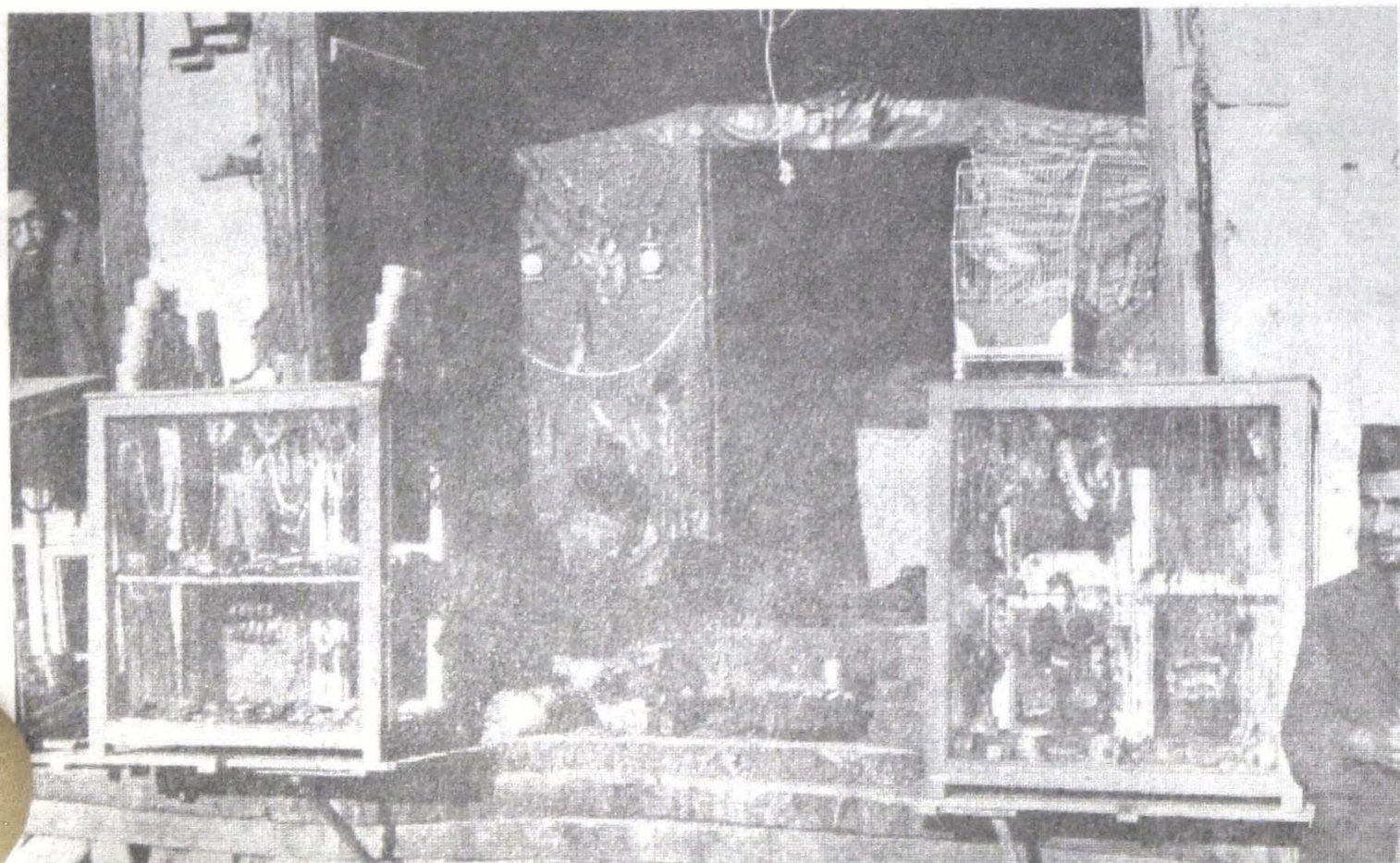




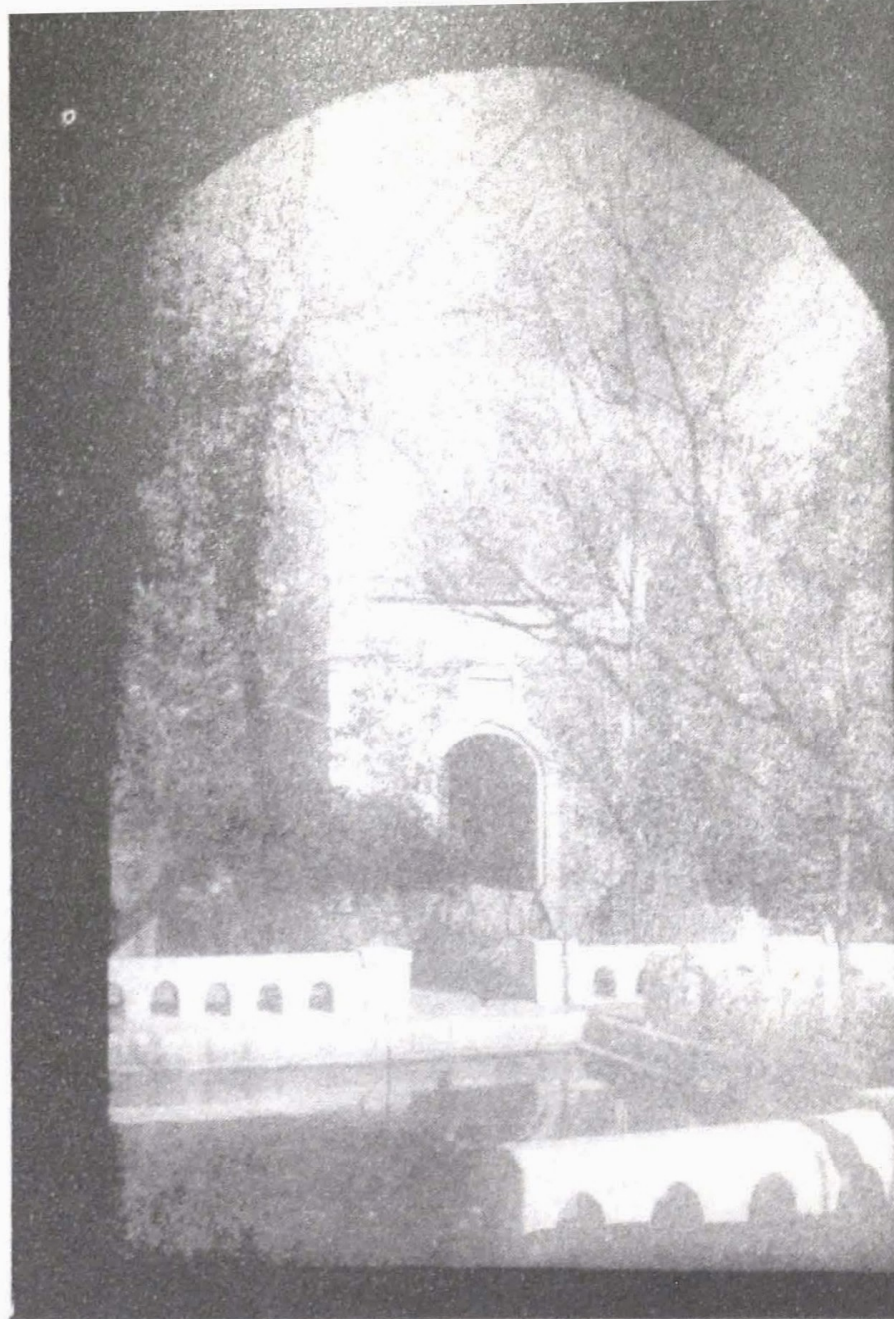
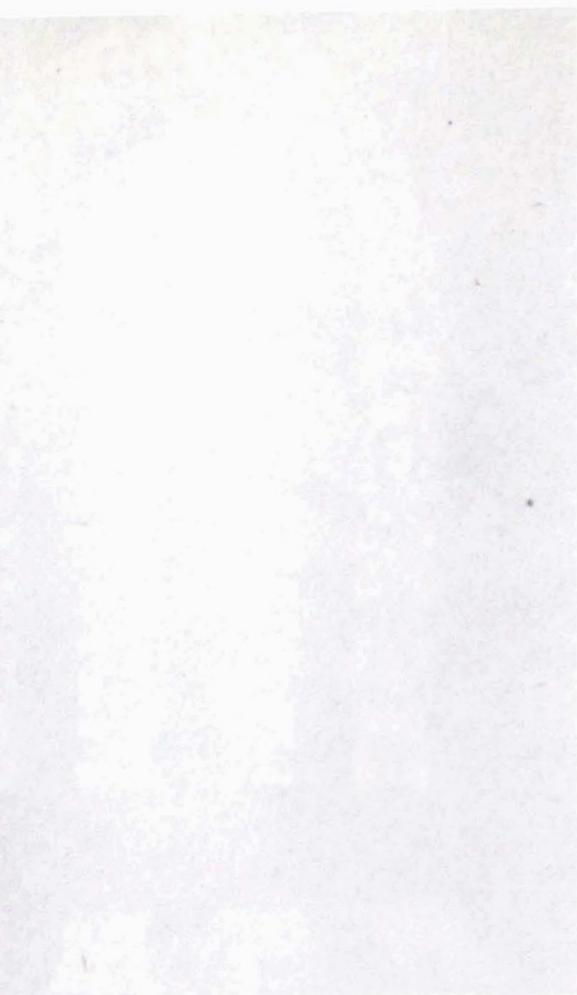


Ba.la Hissar, Kabul's Ancient Citadel; *Wakili*

Jewelry Shop in Char Chatta Bazaar ; *A. Kirios*





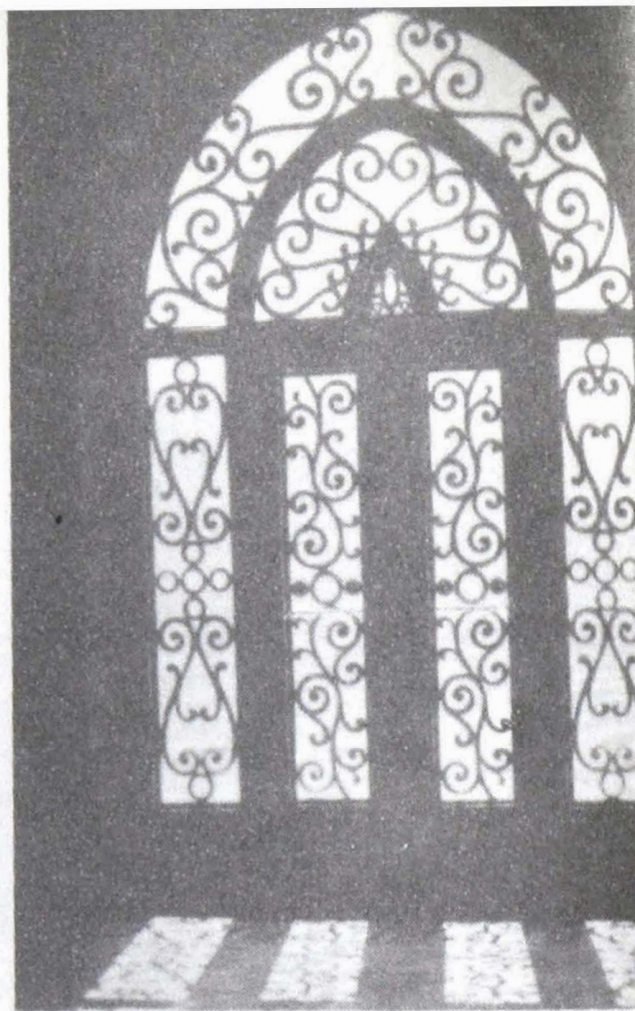
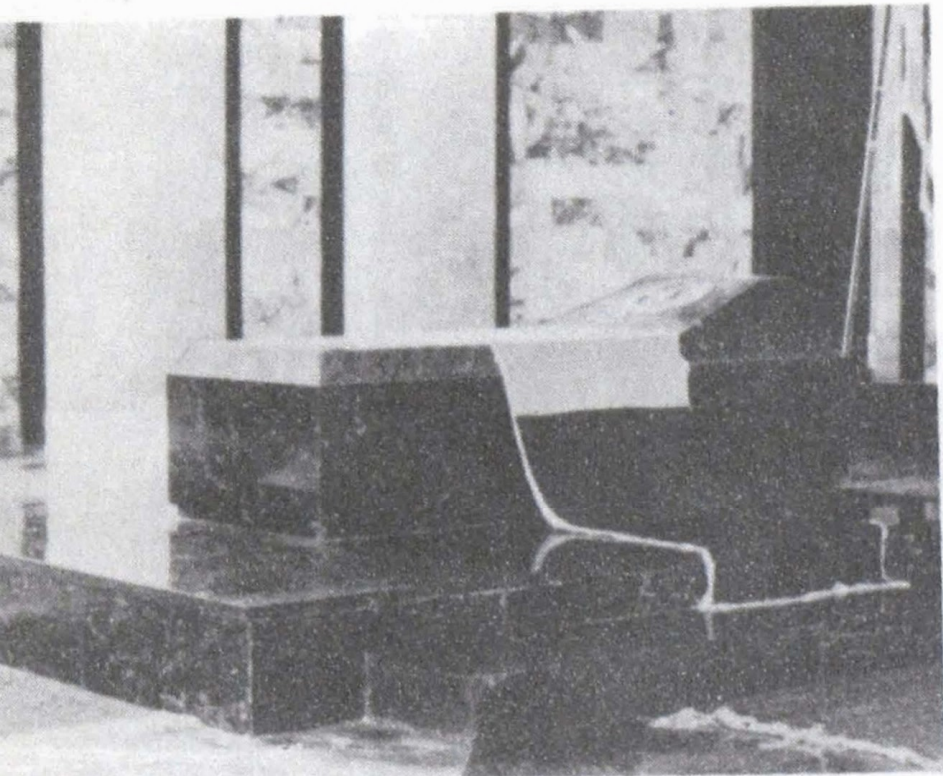


Ziaret-Hazrat-i-Tamin; *Afghan Tourist Organization*

Id Gah Mosque; *A. Kirios*

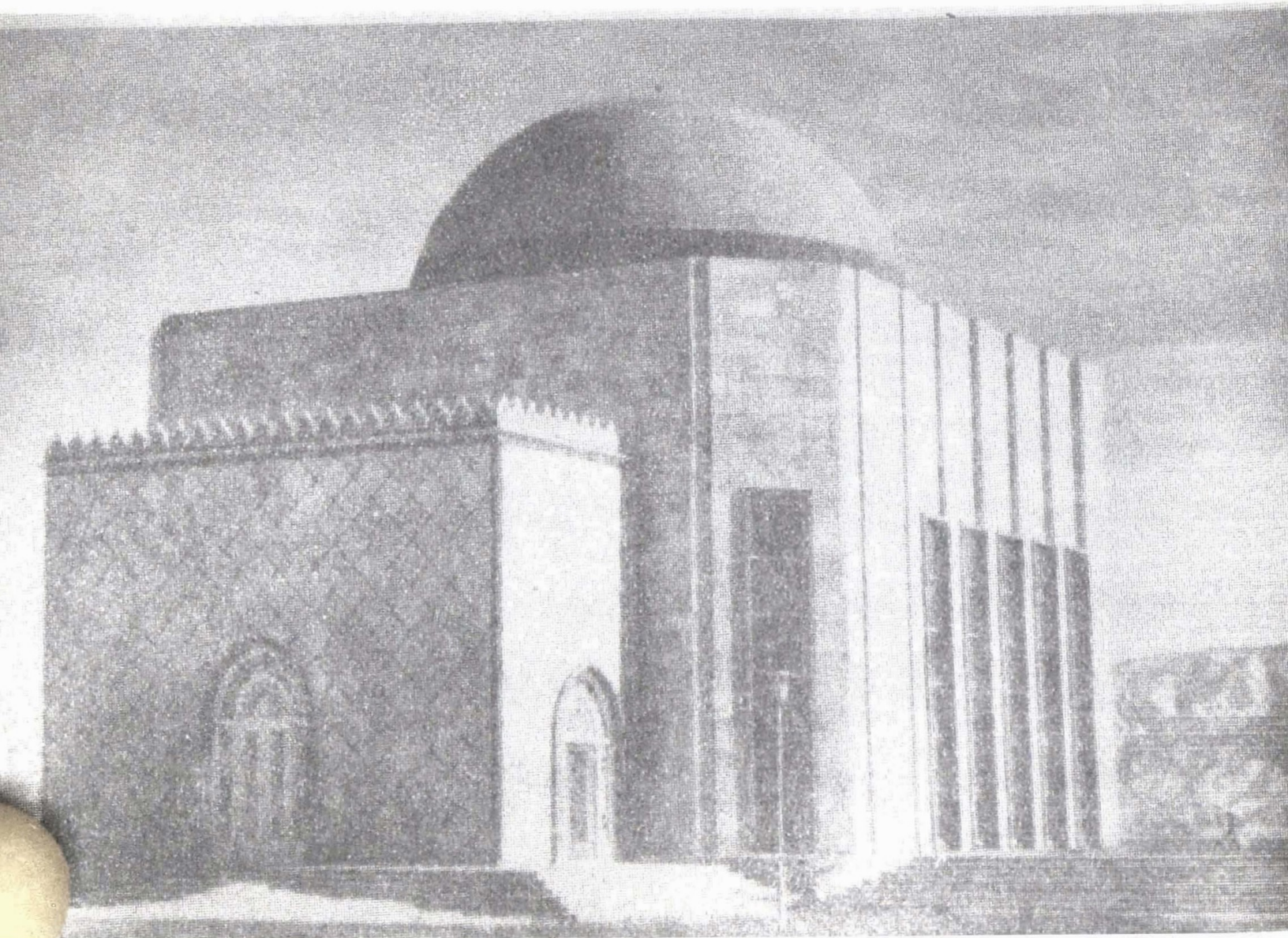






Interiors, Mausoleum of King Nadir Shah; *H.E. Klappert*

Mausoleum of King Nadir Shah; *Afghan Tourist Organization*





old gates of Kabul to disappear.

[9] Beyond the Minar-i-Nejat the ruins of **Bala Hissar** (High Fortress) rise 150 feet above the plain on your right. In spring these slopes quite suddenly burst into vivid colour in sharp contrast to the solemn browns and greys of the heights beyond and stand above the city in glorious confirmation of its poetic title, the Emerald Hill. The site of the Afghan Military Academy since 1939 it is inaccessible to tourists but it is hoped that recent suggestions to make the fort into an historical monument will meet with success especially since the academy was shifted to new quarters in Pul-i-Charkhi on the main road to Jalalabad in 1969. Tour continues, after an historical sketch, [27].

[10] This high fort has been the nucleus of Kabul since the beginning of the city's history. A natural fortress, it completely commanded the city which nestled securely at its foot extending, even as late as the beginning of the 20th century, for only about one mile from north to south and a mile and a half from east to west. The famous walls of Kabul, twenty feet high and twelve feet thick with strategically positioned sentry towers, start at this citadel and follow the crest of the mountains above. Who the first architects of this wall were is not positively known but the work is generally attributed to the Hephtalities of the 5th century. Succeeding dynasties added and repaired them down through the 18th century when they were



at last allowed to fall into decay.

[11] We do not know either who first inhabited this rocky spur. If perchance there is more than fancy to one early scholar's interpretation of Ortospana as an equivalent for the Sanskrit word for "high place or lofty city", then it could well be that here stood the city of the days of Alexander the Great, that capital of the Kabolitæ mentioned by Ptolemy. We have no proof, however.

[12] We do know that the place of the Ratbil Shahan who so fiercely rejected the invasion of Islam which began in the seventh century, was here. Then when, c.900, the Ratbil Shahan finally succumbed to the armies of the Saffarid, the citadel formed a part of that vast group owing an allegiance, albeit loose, to the splendid court of the Caliphs in Baghdad.

[13] Little detail of the next inhabitants of the citadel is available. There was a brief revival of the Hindu lords in the early 10th century, visits of the great Mahmud of Ghazni during his brilliant reign early in the 11th century, brutal attacks under Genghis Khan in the 13th century, and a final return to prosperity under the descendants of the Mongol conqueror, through Tamerlane, during the 14th and 15th centuries. However, though the story is vague, one fact shines through, Bala Hissar witnessed it all. As the 16th century opens we are suddenly presented with a sharply drawn, colourful picture of the citadel, its environs and its people,

by an important inhabitant of the city. This was Zahir-ed-Din Muhammad Babur, who appeared before the gates of Kabul leading a straggling, unpretentious lot of followers. He left it as the founder of the great Moghul Empire of India.

[14] Babur describes his capture of Kabul's citadel in October 1504 thus: "Our troops galloped insultingly close to the Curier's Gate. The men who advanced out of the town, being few in number, could not stand their ground but took flight and sought shelter in the city. A number of the town's people of Kabul had gone out on the glacis of the citadel, on the side of an eminence, in order to witness the sight. As they fled, a great dust arose, and many of them were thrown down. The men in the town were now greatly alarmed and dejected, when Mukim, through some of the Begs, offered to submit, and agreed to surrender Kabul."

[15] Babur loved Kabul and of the citadel he writes: "The citadel is of surprising height, and enjoys an excellent climate, over-looking the large lake, and three meadows which present a very beautiful prospect when the plains are green." His court riddler composed this couplet in tribute to this view: "Drink wine in the citadel of Kabul, send round the cup without stopping; For it is at once a mountain, a sea, a town and a desert."

[16] Within these walls Babur was married to a

princess who had fallen in love with him when he visited Herat, and here his son, Humayun, second Emperor of the Moghuls, was born on 6 March, 1508. It was here too that he took for himself, once an obscure prince deprived of his kingdom, the grand title of Padshah. After 1525 when he transferred the center of his vast empire to India, he continued to issue instructions for the embellishment of the citadel to his son Kamran, then ruling Kabul for his father.

[17] Babur's successors, though they lost their outlying territories to Persia, jealously guarded their hold on Kabul and frequently visited the city so beloved by their illustrious ancestor. The pomp and ceremony which took place before these walls and within its palaces can be imagined from the descriptions we have of the glittering court life at Agra and Delhi. The graceful marble pavilions raised upon these walls in the manner of the forts of Lahore, Delhi and Agra transformed the sombre exterior, giving the citadel a new look mirroring the splendor of the life within.

[18] The citadel was finally wrenched from Moghul hands by the Persian conqueror Nadir-i-Afshar in the middle of the 18th century. His determination to keep the city was so great that he settled families from Persia in the Bala Hissar and further strengthened the citadel by establishing large garrisons staffed with Turkoman troops at the four corners of the city. When he was assassinated in 1747 these Persian citizens tried



unsuccessfully to hold out against the Afghan armies come to reclaim it under Ahmad Shah Durrani (r. 1747-1773), the founder of the Durrani Dynasty. Though Ahmad Shah ruled from Qandahar he preferred to pass the spring and summer in the beautiful climate of Kabul, but while in residence here he lived in a garden by the river rather than within the walls of the Bala Hissar. His son, Timur Shah (r. 1773-1793), however, transferred the capital to Kabul from Qandahar and once again the Bala Hissar became the home of kings.

[19] Timur Shah died within the citadel without having named a successor which led to an ever changing list of claimants to the throne, all of whom were so busy fighting for their claims that they had little time to enjoy their palaces in the citadel of Kabul during the summers and in that of Peshawar during the winter.

[20] The following eye-witness description of one of these kings, Shah Shujah (r. 1803-9; 1839-42), enables one to envision the splendor of the court in which he lived. "The King of Caubul was a handsome man, about thirty years of age, of an olive complexion, with a thick black beard. We thought at first that he had on armour of jewels, but, on close inspection, we found this to be a mistake, and his real dress to consist of a green tunic, with large flowers in gold, and precious stones, over which were a large breast-plate of diamonds, shaped like two flattened fleur de lis, an orna-

ment of the same kind on each thigh, large emerald bracelets on the arms (above the elbow), and many other jewels in different places. In one of the bracelets was the Kohi Noor, known to be one of the largest diamonds in the world. There were also some strings of very large pearls, put on like cross belts, but loose. The crown was about nine inches high, not ornamented with jewels, as European crowns are, but, to appearance, entirely formed of those precious materials. It seemed to be radiated like ancient crowns, and behind the rays appeared peaks of purple velvet: some small branches with pendants seemed to project from the crown; but the whole was so complicated and so dazzling that it was difficult to understand, and impossible to describe. The throne was covered with a cloth adorned with pearls..." (*M. Elphinstone*)

[21] Shah Shujah was unseated by a Barakzai chief of the Durrani family, Dost Muhammad Khan (r. 1826-63). Accounts of the court of the new Amir, of which there are many in English, for from now on European faces, including an American soldier of fortune, appear in increasing numbers in the streets of the citadel, speak of simplicity bordering upon the austere.

[22] Still, we learn that the Bala Hissar Pahin, or lower fortress, contained three palaces situated so that the outer apartments on the east and north walls afforded fine views of the countryside, large barracks and spacious stables for fine horses, a bazaar, and

numerous houses. The houses, about 1,000 in number, were chiefly built of wood and some, in the palace grounds especially, were beautifully carved, inlaid and painted. In the center there was a large open square and numerous gardens throughout made it a most pleasing place in which to live. Further up the hill, above this portion, there was an upper fortress called the Bala Hissar Bala, in which the armoury and the infamous Black Pit, the dungeon of Kabul, were situated.

[23] Amir Dost Muhammad Khan was in turn deprived of his palace by the reappearance in Kabul of Shah Shujah accompanied by a strong British escort which entered the city to reinstate him on 7 August, 1839. This British army was quartered in part of the citadel during the early days of their stay before they moved to the new cantonment built for them near Bemaru Heights, **Tour IV**, [11]. Shah Shujah led an uneasy existence within the citadel walls and at length, four months after disaster struck the British forces in January, 1842, he was ambushed and struck down scarcely a mile and half from its main gate. For awhile Muhammad Akbar Khan, son of his old enemy, Amir Dost Muhammad Khan, held the citadel until the city was occupied again by the British under General Pollock the following September. Though he ordered the demolition of the Chahr Chatta, General Pollock spared the citadel and the resident Amirs of the next thirty odd years continued to reside there, albeit



uncertainly and for short periods.

[24] When the British Mission led by Sir Louis Cavagnari arrived in Kabul in July, 1879 they were given a spacious palace on the south side of the Bala Hissar Pahin, over-looking the marshes. In September of that same year the Mission was mobbed by a group of mutinous Afghan troops come to demand arrears in pay. The situation, building on already established antipathy toward the British presence, soon got out of hand; the Residence was stormed, its occupants killed, its buildings burned. This caused the immediate despatch of British troops under the command of General Roberts who marched to Kabul through the Logar Valley and took possession of the citadel early in October, 1879.

[25] Soon after the occupation a powder magazine situated in the Bala Hissar Bala exploded, thereby necessitating the immediate removal of all troops, first to Siah Sang across the way and then to the cantonments of Sherpur. Following this General Roberts ordered the complete demolition of Bala Hissar, for as he says, "The destruction of the fortified palace in which the massacre had taken place, and which was the symbol of the power of the Afghans... would be a more fitting punishment... and a more lasting memorial of our ability to avenge our countrymen than any we could raise." These orders were carried out during the spring and summer of 1880. Thus ended

the glorious history of this citadel. The next ruler of Afghanistan, Amir Abdur Rahman, elected to build his new palace and citadel on the plain below where the Arg Palace stands today, **Tour IV [2-5]**.

[26] Stop a moment just beyond the Nejat Column at the entrance to the fortress where the eastern gate to the Bala Hissar, the Darwaza Shah Shaheed, once stood. On your left there is a road running toward the east, which is the road to Peshawar via the Lataband Pass. Leading straight to the main gateway of the citadel, this road was used by early visitors from India. On occasions of State these visitors approached with great ceremony, riding in gilt howdahs on elephants as Sir Alexander Burnes and Sir Louis Cavagneri did, or on gaily caparisoned chargers as did General Roberts, passing down through lines of troops in brilliant uniforms. It also witnessed the sad spectacle of the harassed British army as it marched past on its way to India that cold day in January, 1842. Abandoned as the main highway when the Tang-i-Gharu was opened, it is still traversable in good weather and joins the road to Jalalabad at Sarobi. (*Short Trips, D.*)

[27] Proceed straight ahead and take next road (*unpaved*) to right at side of petrol station. (*Straight ahead to Shewaki, Guldara, and the Logar Valley.*) The marshes of Qalah-i-Ashmat Khan, the lake admired by Babur, now part of His Majesty's hunting preserve, is on the left. To the right, above the old moat on which

soldiers skated during the winter months of 1879-1880, the walls and buttresses of Bala Hissar are impressively preserved.

[28] Continue along the banks of the marshes. In the spring large flocks of wild duck settle in this protected area. Turn right at the electric sub-station after passing a small mosque on your right and a few shops on your left. At the next fork proceed straight ahead for an introductory view of this important valley. Right to **Ziarat-i-Tamim** and **Cheshme Khedr**, below [41-42].

[29] This road runs straight through the center of **Shohada-i-Salehin** (Pious Martyrs), Kabul's largest public cemetery. On your right an imposing new mausoleum of slender marble columns rises above the final resting place of Salauddin Saljooqi, a distinguished writer, philosopher, poet and diplomat who died in June, 1970. Memorial services at which selected readings from his works are read are held here each year on the anniversary of his death. They are led by his wife and student, Hodayra Saljooqi.

[30] Further ahead the road swings around a small knoll. Stop a moment for a panoramic view of this lovely valley. Bala Hissar stands out impressively to the left. The blue-domed mausoleum of King Nadir Shah (r. 1929-33) stands on Tepe Maranjan directly ahead with the cupolated mausoleum of King Nadir Shah's great-grandfather, Sultan Muhammad Telai, on the slope just below it.



[31] When Buddhism was paramount in the valley, during the period of the Kushans and the Kushano-Sassanians, this was the most venerated portion of the Kabul Valley. Remains of Buddhist monasteries, now for the most part completely obliterated by time and and unrecognizable to all but the practiced eye, dot the mountainsides around the entire semi-circle formed by the ridges behind you; from the eastern point visible above Bagrami, far to your right, to the Bala Hissar. Interesting stupas still stand at Shewaki at the base of the mountains to the east and Buddhist statues dating from the third and fourth centuries have been recovered from a monastery on Tepe Maranjan. Later, during the period of the Ratbil Shahan, Hindu shrines replaced the Buddhist stupas. Both Burnes and Masson speak of recovering painted clay statues from the vicinity of Panjeshah above you [34] and Shams to your left [41] which they related to the pre-Islamic days of the Buddhist kings and the Ratbil Shahan.

[32] Thus for 2000 years this area has been revered by the citizens of Kabul. It holds the same place in the hearts of her people today for four of the holiest shrines in Kabul are located here: to the east under a clump of trees below you on your right you may see the dome of the Ziarat-i-Jan Baz, a shrine revered by the followers of the Nakhshbandi sect, near which lies the tomb of the wife of Mahmud Hotaki, the son of Mir Wais of Qandahar who captured the throne

of the Persian Safavids at Isphahan in 1722. Nestled beneath the trees above you is the Ziarat-i-Panjeshah-i-Mardan; to your left two wooded spots mark the location of Ziarat-i-Tamim and Cheshme Khedr.

[33] Situated on the acclivities of hills, in recesses where springs encourage the embellishment of trees and gardens, these holy spots command beautiful views and are visited by the citizens of Kabul on festive days, especially during the spring when the Arghawan (Red-bud or Judas Tree) flowers. If you wish to visit these shrines you will find the caretakers most cordial but you are urged to remember that these are holy places and we recommend that you ask an Afghan friend to accompany you. For the tourist, the Tourist Bureau will be happy to provide a guide. *Those not wishing to visit the shrines should return to the Minar-i-Nejat and continue the tour from [44].*

[34] You may drive up the hill from the knoll to the foot of Ziarat-i-Panjeshah (The King's Hand). On the way note the formations on a spur to your right. The conical shape of the upper portion rests upon a rectangular terrace, and together it seems very probable that this was once a Buddhist stupa with a monastery below. Masson reports that "quantities of idols" were recovered when the foundations for the shrine were being excavated in the early years of the 19th century. A flight of stairs constructed in 1963 by a pious gentleman in memory of his wife, leads you to a doorway giving entrance to

a broad terrace on which there is a simple open mosque and a fish pond.

[35] The Ziarat stands at the end of this terrace under large old chinar trees. Having removed your shoes, you enter into a small vestibule, to the right of which there is a large columned veranda, and then directly into a square room in the center of which there is a square of marble supporting a high flag pole. In the back wall there is an impression of a hand in the natural rock believed to have been made by Hazrat Ali. Ali was a cousin and son-in-law of the Prophet Muhammad. He was the 4th Caliph and an active participator in the early battles waged by the Prophet and in later battles for the cause of Islam. The legends of Ali number well over 1000, many relating to miraculous deeds enacted in Afghanistan though he never actually came here. In the right wall a low door leads you into a prayer room. A small contribution may be left near the flag pole.

[36] Leaving the Ziarat one finds a corridor passing under the veranda leading to a path following the boulder-filled stream bed to a covered spring. The spring has recently been enclosed in a concrete structure and locked. If you wish to enter, ask the caretaker. An inscription over the door dates from the time of Shah Mahmud Sadozai, 1803. It is interesting to note how springs such as this have been objects of veneration throughout the centuries, irrespective of race and creed; Buddhist,



Hindu and Muslim have each built their shrines beside them.

[37] This path leads to the 1,000 foot peak known as **Takht-i-Shah** (The King's Throne), the highest peak in this range known by its name. The climb is said to take three to four hours. Babur described a building on its summit, part of a palace belonging to Zamburak Shah, one of the ancient Ratbil Shahan of pre-Islamic days, which is also described by Masson. In October, 1879 the British army stormed Bala Hissar by marching along the steep heights of Takht-i-Shah from the Logar Valley. In 1929 the forces of General Nadir Khan, under the leadership of H.R.H. Marshal Shah Wali Khan stormed the city by the same rocky heights and the city first knew of their arrival upon hearing the throb of drums from the King's Throne.

[38] The Marshal describes this event in his Memoirs. From his position on the Zamburak Peak, he listened to the "rattling of rifles, guns rent the air" and reports of enemy forces converging on Kabul from north and south came in with distressing regularity. "The situation was extremely dangerous. The only course left to us was to take advantage of the darkness of night and launch an all-out attack. It was decided to announce the offensive by the beating of drums from the Zamboorak Hills. . . . I ordered the Waziris to beat their drums from the Zamboorak Hills. All the other drums stationed at the Sherdawaze and Asmai

Hills followed suit, making a terrific noise. Our forces, surging like waves, began to descend the hills.”

[39] After leaving the Ziarat, at the foot of the staircase, note a streak of white outcropping in the hill to your right. Legend says that this was once another dragon, similar to the dragon at Bamiyan, which was killed here by Hazrat Ali.

[40] Return to your car and retrace route to junction, noting, on your left, the ruins of a mausoleum, now without a dome, called Ziarat-i-Sher Surkh (The Shrine of the Red Lion) built in the Timurid style late in the 15th century. Further on, to your right is another Timurid mausoleum in fairly good condition, called **Seh Oghor** (Three Holes, possibly a corruption of the Chagatai word, *Ulugh*). There are five tombs here, all descendents of the Emperor Babur’s paternal uncle, Ulugh Beg, who ruled at Kabul just prior to Babur’s arrival in 1504. Two of his daughters, Fakhur Nesa Begum (The Bride, d. 1505) and Aq Begum (The White Lady d. 1506) rest here. Sher Surkh and Seh Oghur are the only examples of Timurid architecture still standing in Kabul.

[41] On reaching the junction with a road coming in from the left, turn left to visit the spring called **Shams** beside the **Ziarat-i-Hazrat-i-Tamim Jaber-i-Ansar**, the most sacred shrine in Kabul. The modern building sheltering two extremely large sarcophagi was completed in 1939. There is some question as to who lies here.

Tradition says it is the final resting place of Shahaba (One Who Knew the Prophet) Tamim, who led a spiritual mission to Kabul in advance of General Abdur Rahman ibn Samura commanding the first Islamic army to enter Kabul somewhere around 644 A.D. According to this tradition, Tamim and his companions were massacred on this spot by the Ratbil Shah from the Bala Hissar. This fateful night is called *Shab-i-Alal-ghafla*, the Night of the Surprise. Tradition refers to the second tomb as being that of Jaber, but does not specify which Jaber is intended. Most accounts accept it as Jaber-i-Ansari, son of the 11th century philosopher and poet of Herat, Khwaja Abdullah Ansari. Jaber was the father of Ashukhan and Arefan, Tour V, [2]. It is curious that Babur, who was so meticulous with most of his details regarding Kabul, mentions the holy shrine near the spring of Shams but fails to associate any name with it.

[42] On the hillside behind and to the right of the Ziarat-i-Tamin there is a small shrine tucked away under some trees by another spring known as **Cheshme Khedr** (Khedr's Spring). Khedr known locally as Khizr, is the name of a prophet who appears to the lost and needy in the guise of an old man with a long white beard. Khizr mingles with ordinary folk, however, in order to find the needy, unrecognizable except for the fact that he has no bones in his thumbs. On festive days when all congratulate one another, therefore, many



purposely feel the thumb while shaking hands, just in case Khizr should happen to be among them. He appeared in a dream to Mahmud of Ghazni at this spot and as a result the spring is also called the *Nazargah-i-Khedr*, the Place where Khedr Appeared. Babur speaks of both springs, Shams and Khedr, as the "favourite resorts of the people of Kabul" and they remain so today. Cheshme Khedr is visited twice a year by the Hindus of Kabul for it is a holy pilgrimage site for them as well as for the Muslims, having retained its holy character since ancient times.

[43] As you enter the doorway into the courtyard of Cheshme Khedr you find yourself in a garden open toward the hills on the left. To the right is an open veranda with carved wooden pillars in the style universally used throughout the city up to the beginning of the 20th century but now rarely to be seen. Straight ahead is a small building built over the spring. On the veranda flanking the door there are primitive paintings in bright colours of the Ka'aba at Mecca and an inscription extolling the beauty of the spring composed in 1880 and inscribed in gold on a blue background. Passing through the door after having removed your shoes, you enter a simple vestibule in the back wall of which a low door leads to the spring. Traces of red powder used in the Hindu ritual can be seen on the right. The spring is sometimes used as a *Chilakhana* (House of Forty Days) by pious Muslims

who wish to retire to meditate in complete seclusion. To the left of this building covering the spring, there is a small mosque.

[44] From Cheshme Khedr, return to the Nejat Column. *The road to your right joins the Lataband Pass road.* Proceed straight ahead down Muhammad Akbar Khan Wat.

[45] On your right is the **Chaman-i-Hozuri** (*to left carpet and antique stores*), Kabul's first Golf Course during the time of Amir Habibullah, with the Exhibition Grounds beyond. These grounds are used during the week of Jeshn Istiklal (Independence Festival) for the display of arts and crafts and other exhibits depicting development projects in Afghanistan. Jeshn is held every year during the last week in August to commemorate the acquisition of Independence in 1919. During this week, the streets of Kabul are decorated with gay banners and coloured lights festoon the streets and buildings to please the many visitors to the city from the provinces. Competitive games of all sorts are played, the most colourful being that of *niza-zadan* or tent-pegging, played on the Chaman itself. The beautiful horses proudly prancing in their fancy trappings are ridden by superb horsemen dressed in flowing white robes and gay velvet vests embroidered in gold. They make a stunning picture against the hills as they gallop over the green fields.

[46] At the end of the Chaman, turn right, passing

the Ghazi Stadium named for Sardar Shah Mahmud-Ghazi, on your left. Further on, two roads branch off to the right leading past the Exhibition Halls and a depression which is flooded to form a picturesque lake during Jeshn. The waters prettily mirror the spectacular fireworks set forth from an island in their midst. The very large building at the base of the hill is the Kabul Nandari Theatre where national theatre groups and international artists present plays and concerts. In 1930 workmen working in this area came upon a vase containing about 100 coins from the 6th to 4th centuries B.C. The varied nature of these coins, which may be seen in the Coin Room of the Kabul Museum, suggest that they were obtained through trade with the Achaemenids. The presence of several gold and silver ingots and pieces of jewelry make it possible to conjecture that they once belonged to a Kabul goldsmith of Achaemenid days who had a shop here.

[47] Passing these two turn-offs continue straight ahead to the junction of three roads. The road to the left leads to Nadir Shah Mina more popularly spoken of as the *macroroyan*, a series of highrise apartments being constructed with assistance from the Soviet Union. Straight ahead a road leads to the coal briquet plant. Take the road to the right and proceed to the summit of **Tepe Maranjan**. The name Maranjan is interesting, being the proper name of an extremely rich magician of pre-Islamic times. It is said that the magician turned



his immense riches into ashes one day and thus this hill was formed.

[48] The imposing **Mausoleum of King Nadir Shah** (r. 1929-1933) stands on this hill as guardian of the city spread out below it. Other members of the Royal Family are also at rest here and on the southern slope there is the Mausoleum of Sultan Muhammad Telai, great-grandfather of King Nadir Shah.

[49] Tepe Maranjan offers an impressive panoramic view of Kabul. Jadi Maiwand runs east-west through the center of the city directly in front of you. To the south, crowded between it and the mountain, Shor Bazaar and the old city lie at the foot of Bala Hissar from which the ancient walls run along the crest of the mountains. The large buildings of the old Military Academy lie on the northern slopes of the citadel and the round tower mid-way up the hill above the old city marks the site of **Khwaja Safa, Tour V. [10]**. South and south-east of Bala Hissar is the beautiful valley revered since early Buddhist times. The Heights of Bemaru, from which the Emperor Babur first looked upon Kabul, stand out prominently to the north.

[50] Beyond Nadir Shah's Mausoleum, toward the east, workmen accidentally came upon the remains of a Buddhist monastery which was subsequently excavated by DAFA in 1933. Near the south-west corner of the outer wall of the monastery various statues were found and in the inner west wall there was a niche decorated

with painting in ochre, blue, yellow and white depicting a bodi tree in flower. A gracefully modelled Bodhisativa, now in the basement of the Kabul Museum sat beneath the tree. A smaller Bodhisativa sculpture from this site may be seen in the foyer of the Museum. The style, though basically that of Gandhara, reveals the marked Indianization of the later period. This, plus the hoard of coins found in the monastery, date the complex during the Kushano-Sassanian period in the 4th century A.D. Weather has so obliterated the exavations that nothing of outstanding interest remains at the site today.

[51] Return to the Stadium and turn right on Muhammad Akbar Khan Wat. Across the road on your left is the **Id Gah Mosque** begun during the reign of Amir Abdur Rahman (d. 1901) and completed by his son Amir Habibullah (d. 1919). It has been used since on religious days of festival and for the religious ceremonies attending State ceremonies such as coronations. It was here that Independence was announced to the citizens of Kabul gathcred in its courtyard in 1919; a huge crowd jubilantly shouting with enthusiastic acclamation. On your left, just past the Stadium, by the side of the reviewing stands used for the Jeshn parade, is the entrance to the **Silk Factory** and to the office where terrazzo tiles may be purchased. The road continues past the open air theatre, and passes over the Kabul River via the Pul-i-Qalah Mahmud Khan. Turn left. *Right to Peshawar via Tangi Gharu.* The

tall clock tower built during the reign of King Nadir Shah stands on the site of Mahmud Khan's Fort which played such an important part during the final days of the British army in Kabul in 1841-2. Mahmud Khan had been a staunch opponent of the British ever since their first appearance in Kabul with their puppet Shah Shujah in tow. In September, 1841 he was present at the first meeting of the leaders of the revolt which began with the attack on Sir Alexander Burnes' residence in the Shor Bazaar. Turn left around the tall clock tower (*right to Jalalabad via the Tangi Gharu*). The Clock tower was built during the reign of King Nadir Shah (1929-1933) but it stands on the site of a *qalah* (fort) belonging to Mahmud Khan who was a staunch opponent of the British during the First Anglo-Afghan War (1838-1842). In September, 1841 Mahmud Khan was a prominent participant at the first meeting of the leaders of the revolt which began with the attack on Sir Alexander Burne's residence in the Shor Bazaar (above, 7) the following November. The fort gained prominence as the revolt continued because of its position mid-way between the city and the British cantonment opposite Bemaru, Tour IV, [II] and after Envoy Macnaghten was killed on the 23rd of December in the vicinity of the present Slaughter House on the road to Jalalabad, a number of his escorts were kept as hostages in this fort.

[52] Continue ahead along Jadi Istiklal (Indepen-



dence Avenue) through **Istiklal Park**, newly created in January, 1970, when all the old buildings in the area, including the historic customs house, were razed. Only the **Minar-i-Istiklal** (Independence Monument) still stands. This monument commemorates General Nadir Khan's (later King Mohammad Nadir Khan, r. 1929-1933) victory over the British at Thal on 27 May, 1919, during the Third Anglo-Afghan War. This was the first monument of its kind to be erected in Kabul and originally it was more elaborate than it is today, with a statue at each corner: a soldier at the northern and southern corners, a lion in chains symbolizing Afghanistan in bondage at the eastern corner, and a pot of flowers on the western corner. These were destroyed during the Bacha Saqao period (1929) and subsequently replaced by four canons. Ambitious plans for the development of Istiklal Park are on the drawing boards. These call for a new parliament building and additional ministerial buildings among others. This area will, in other words, eventually become the very center of modern Kabul.

[53] At the fountain, the Ministry of Defense (1970) stands to the right (north), the cartographic Institute (1963) to the left. The gates to the royal palace described in Tour IV, [3] lie straight ahead. Turn left around the policeman in front of the palace and return to Pushtunistan Square, passing the Ministry of Mines and Industries (1963) on your left.



to Istalif, Koh Daman, Panjshir, Salang Pass

Bagh-i-Bala

[16]

## TOUR III

British Embassy



Kolola Pushta

[6]

Mir Bacha Khan Ghazi Wal

Shahrara  
Tower

Chahrahi Ansari



Sherpur Mosque

[5]

Chahrahi Taurabaz Khan

Ghazi Square

[1]

Foreign Ministry



Arg Palace

Pushtunistan Square

to Tour I





## **TOUR III**

### **SHAHR-I-NAU TO THE KABUL UNIVERSITY VIA BAGH-I-BALA**

#### **OF SPECIAL INTEREST**

- Foreign Ministry [1]**
- Masjid-i-Sherpur [5]**
- Kolola Pushta [6]**
- Bagh-i-Bala [16]**
- Kabul University [30]**

*Minimum time complete tour: 1.5 hours.*

[1] From Pushtunistan Square proceed in a north-westerly direction on Ibn Sena Wat past Amir Abdur Rahman's Mausoleum, to the second traffic light, at Ghazi Square. Turn right onto Shah Mahmud-Ghazi Wat (*left and straight ahead, Tour I [10]*), passing the Foreign Ministry grounds on the right. The red building with its interesting architecture was built during the reign of Amir Habibullah (r. 1901-1919) when it was known as the Kasre-estar or Star Palace. It housed the Foreign Ministry until 1965 when the offices were transferred to the handsome gray marble building standing nearby.

[2] The Prime Ministry and Ministry of Justice are

located across the street from the Foreign Ministry. Next to the Ministry of Justice a short street leads directly to one of Kabul's more interesting shopping centers at Chahrah-i-Taurabaz Khan (antiquities, rugs, embroideries, curios, books, tinned goods, fresh fruits and vegetables, etc). Leaving this shopping spree aside for the moment, continue straight on to pass the palatial home of the late Sardar Mahmud-Ghazi now partially demolished, on the left, and the large compound of the United Nations, on the right. The Turkish Embassy is located across the street from the United Nations in a beautiful tree-filled garden, once the home of Prince Amanullah before he became king in 1919. The old palace was demolished in 1959 to make way for a new embassy.

[3] Turn left at the traffic light. The Pashto Academy is located on the northwest corner of this crossroad. The Academy was established for the furtherance of Pashto language and culture and it puts out such publications as encyclopedias and dictionaries in Pashto. Passing through the next traffic light, note a series of low buildings with colorful facades on the left. This is the Mother and Child Care Center which was established with a grant-in-aid from the Soviet Union and inaugurated in April, 1970. The Center includes a kindergarten for 200 children where all the miniature furniture is gaily painted; a baby care center and a mother care clinic. Headquarters of the Afghan Women's



Institute are located just beyond, next to the Zaineb Cinema.

[4] You are now passing along the dividing line between two of Kabul's more elite residential sections; Sherpur on the right and Shahr-i-Nau (New City) on the left. Shahr-i-Nau Park begins a block beyond the Zaineb Cinema, on the left, where you will find a recreation center, playgrounds, tennis courts, refreshment stands and a book kiosk in addition to the Park Cinema which shows films in various foreign languages. There are many restaurants specializing in *kabab*, skewered morsels of lamb, which are broiled over charcoal braziers outside each restaurant, sending the air with savory odors hard to resist.

[5] The charming little mosque standing to the right at the next traffic light gives this square two popular names, completely eclipsing its official name of Shahabuddin Sam Ghorī Square, honoring a 12th century Ghorid king ruling from Ghazni. Most Kabulis refer to the square as Chahrahi (Crossroads of) Haji Yaqub and the mosque as Masjid-i-Haji Yaqub although the municipality dubbed it the **Sherpur Mosque** when they built it for the city in 1957. Who Haji Yaqub was is not entirely clear except for the fact that he was a highly respected person who made his home in the area. The blue tiles used in decorating the facade were made in the workshops of the famous mosque of Herat. Their glistening color have led foreigners to call it the

Blue Mosque. Condolence services for prominent Afghans are often held here.

[6] The **Fort of Kolola Pushta** (Round Hill) stands high on a hill at the far end of this street, directly ahead at the stoplight. On the 14th of December, 1928, Bacha Saqao, the Son-of-a-Water-Carrier from the Koh Daman who was to become king, advanced on Kabul with approximately 1000 men. Successfully capturing the fort on Kolola Pushta, which was fully stocked with arms and ammunition, they bombarded the city until it fell to them on the 19th of January, 1929. The fort is still garrisoned. No visitors.

[7] Bacha Saqao did not take Kabul without occasional reversals, however, even though the early capture of Kolola Pushta was an important key to his success. One popular story, for instance, tells us that the royal forces once trapped Bacha Saqao in the tall tower of Habibiya College which is now called **Burj-i-Shahrara** or the Red Tower (see map). The tower was then a full storey taller than it is today and the rebel leader was in its topmost corner so his guards relaxed, believing escape impossible. One of the Saqao's lieutenants, however, managed to lead a horse up to the foot of the tower and the athletic commander jumped down onto its back and galloped off to return another day to reduce the school to the pile of rubble it is today. The building had been built by Amir Abdur Rahman (r. 1880-1901) on the very spot where he met with

British officers as they departed Kabul in 1880, leaving the city in his care. Both Amir Abdur Rahman and his son Amir Habibullah (r. 1901-1919) entertained their foreign guests in this palace for it was one of the city's most attractive buildings, but King Amanullah (r. 1919-1929) turned it over to Habibiya, a boy's high school Tour I, [40]. There is an inscription on the tower giving its full history which was put up by order of King Amanullah.

[8] The **Christian Cemetery** or Kabre Ghora (*ghora* being a popular 19th century term for British soldier) which was established by the British during the Second Anglo-Afghan War (1878-1880) is located at the northeastern end (to right at mosque) of Shahabuddin Wat (open 9-11, except Friday). An inscribed pillar of black stone about half-way down this street commemorates some Afghan warriors (*shaheed*) who fell in 1879 while fighting against the British in this area. The pillar was put up in 1912.

[9] Only a few fragments of the early British tombstones remain and these have been embedded on one wall of the cemetery. Sir Aurel Stein, the renowned explorer-archaeologist, rests here. Having spent a lifetime in pioneer work tracing the passage of Buddhism from India to China through Central Asia, he died in Kabul in 1943 at the age of 82. Sir Aurel had spent 40 years trying to get permission to visit Kabul which makes his death a few days after his arrival all the more



tragic. He caught a chill just after arriving.

[10] Turn left at the Sherpur Mosque and continue straight ahead on Shahabuddin Wat to Ansari Square at the next stoplight. Along these few blocks the discriminating shopper will find many fascinating buys, from rugs and antiques to sophisticated boutique items straight from Europe. Florists display flowers flown in from Europe and several well-known Afghan artists have their studios here. Those interested in contemporary Afghan art will find a visit to the Afghan Art Gallery most rewarding. Inaugurated in February, 1971, it is located on the first floor, above Marks and Sparks, just to the left of the stoplight at Chahrahi Ansari or Ansari Square. Kabul's first private legitimate theater, the Kawkab, opened in May, 1971, is located in a building next door.

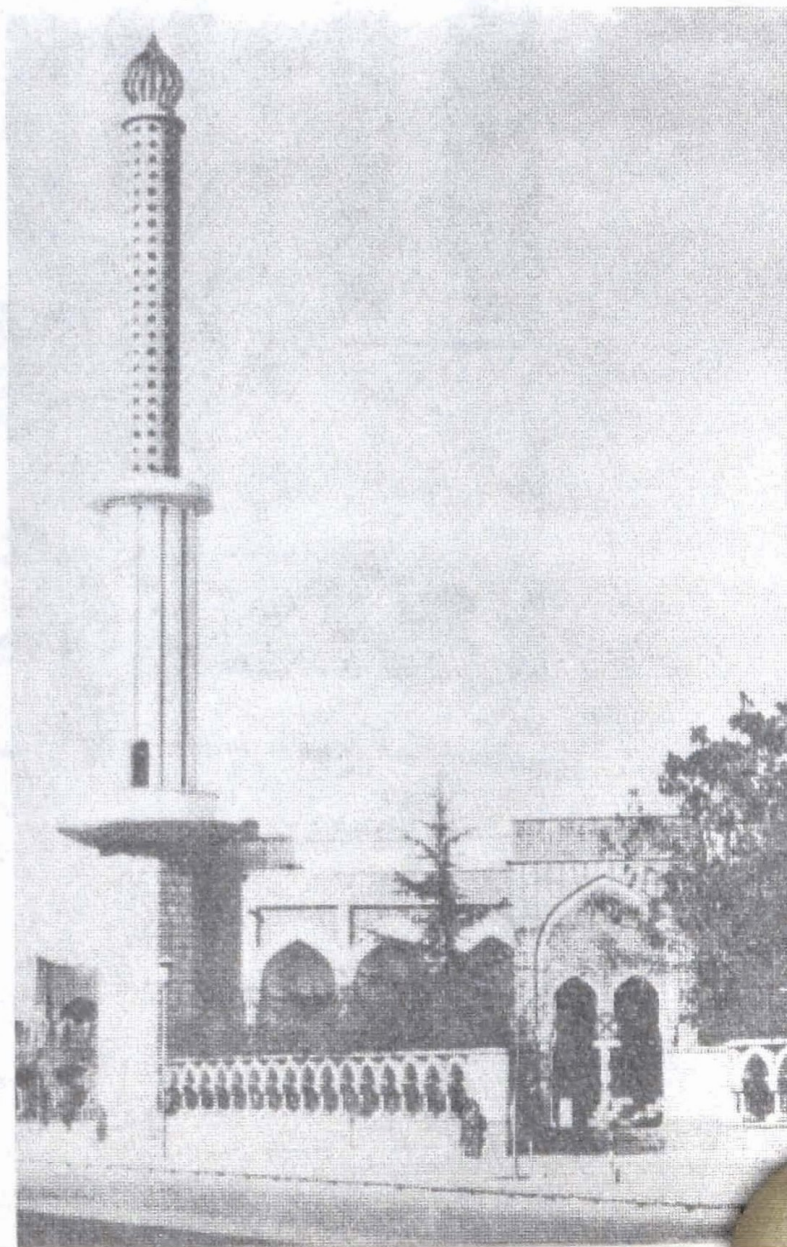
[11] Proceed straight ahead through Ansari Square and veer right at the next traffic light. *Sharp Right at traffic light to Burj-i-Shahrara, see above 7.* A new hospital is located in a garden on the left. This street is called Shahrara Wat recalling the Moghul gardens described by the Emperor Jahangir and discussed in Tour I, 17. Today, however, the name refers specifically to a densely populated village-suburb of Kabul which lies hidden on the left behind a low line of nondescript houses and serais. There are a great number of motorserais and workshops along this stretch and a very colorful fruit bazaar standing just outside the wholesale fruit serai.



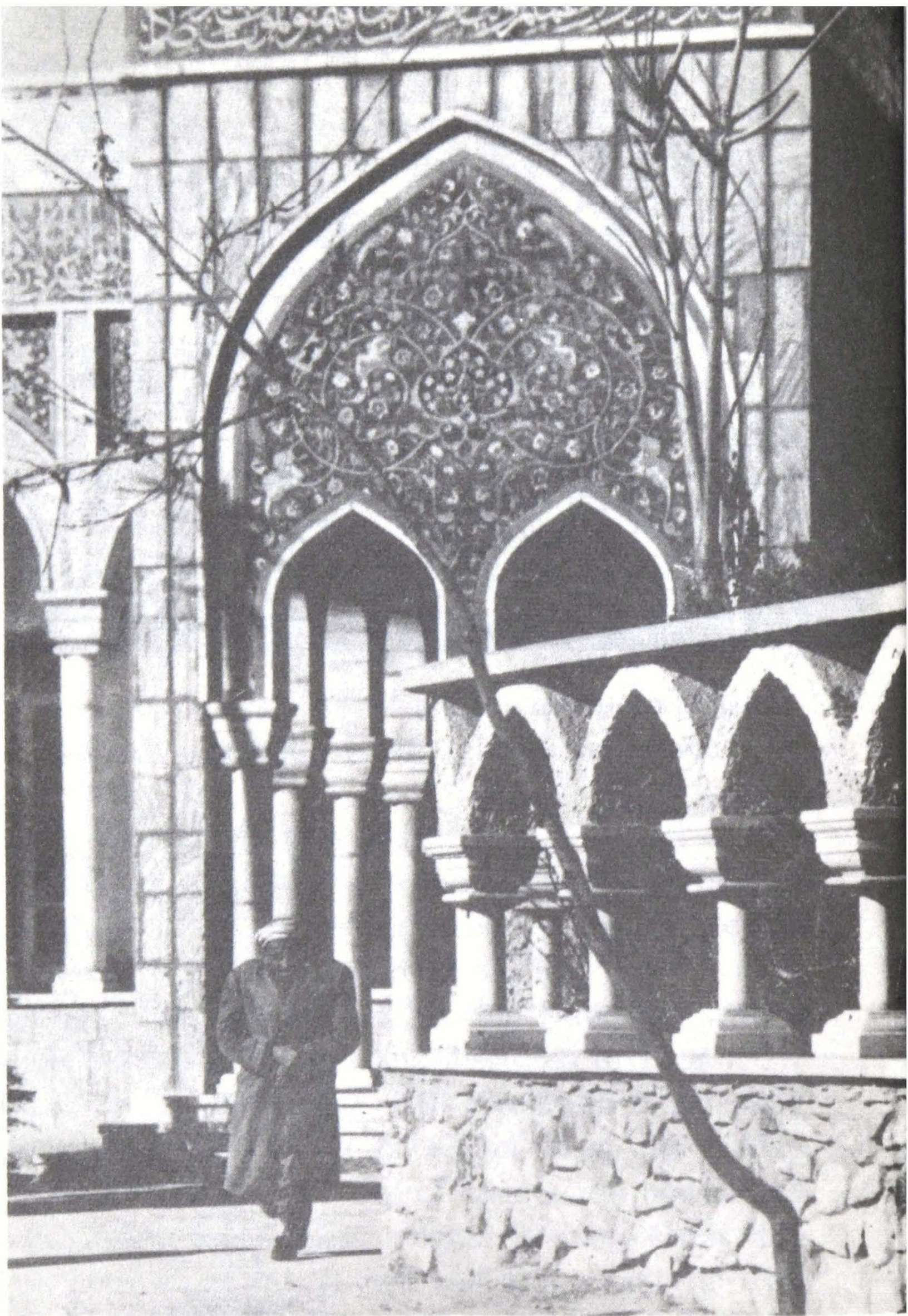


Ministry of Foreign Affairs; *Wakili*

Sherpur Mosque; *J. Tobias*

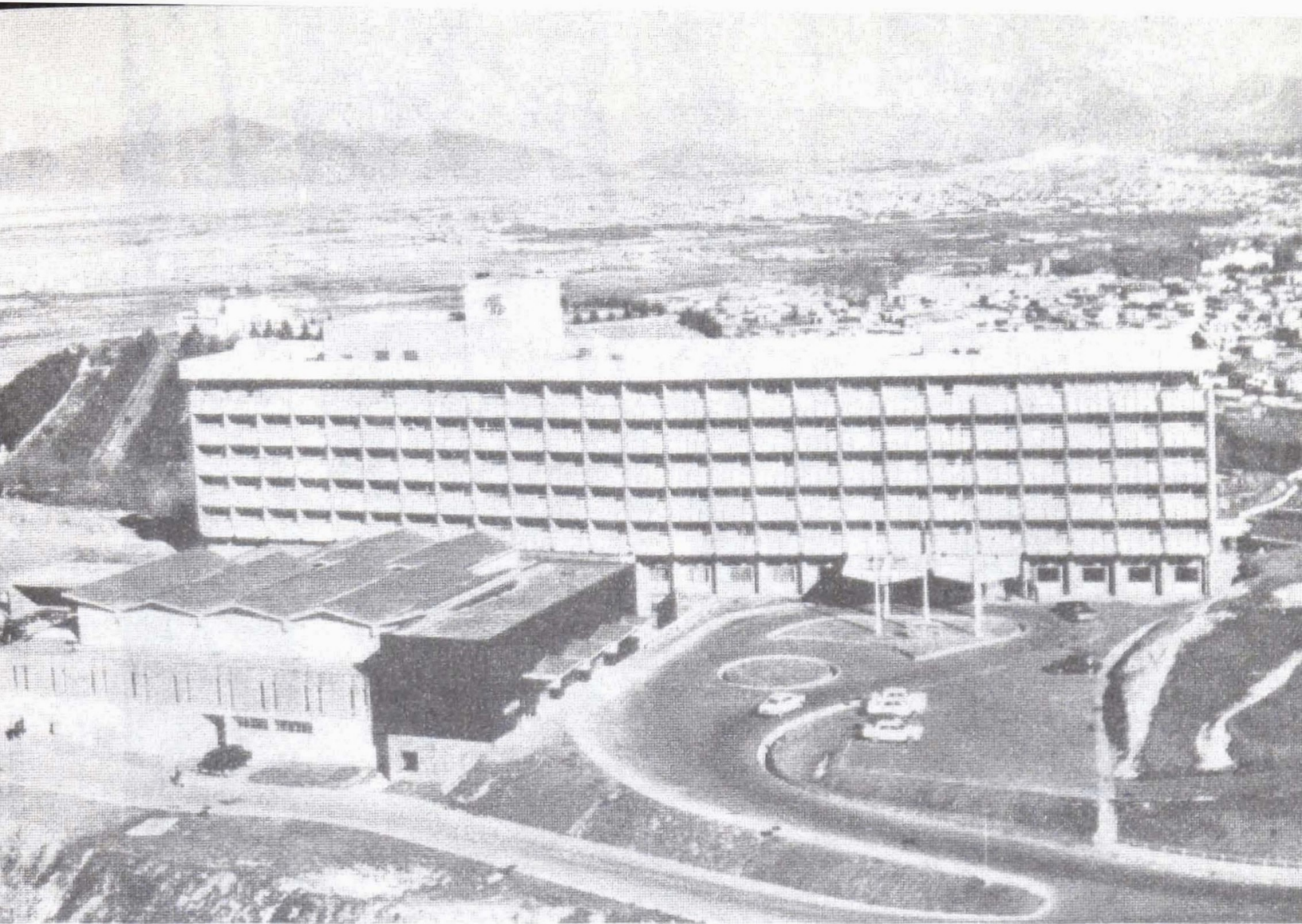






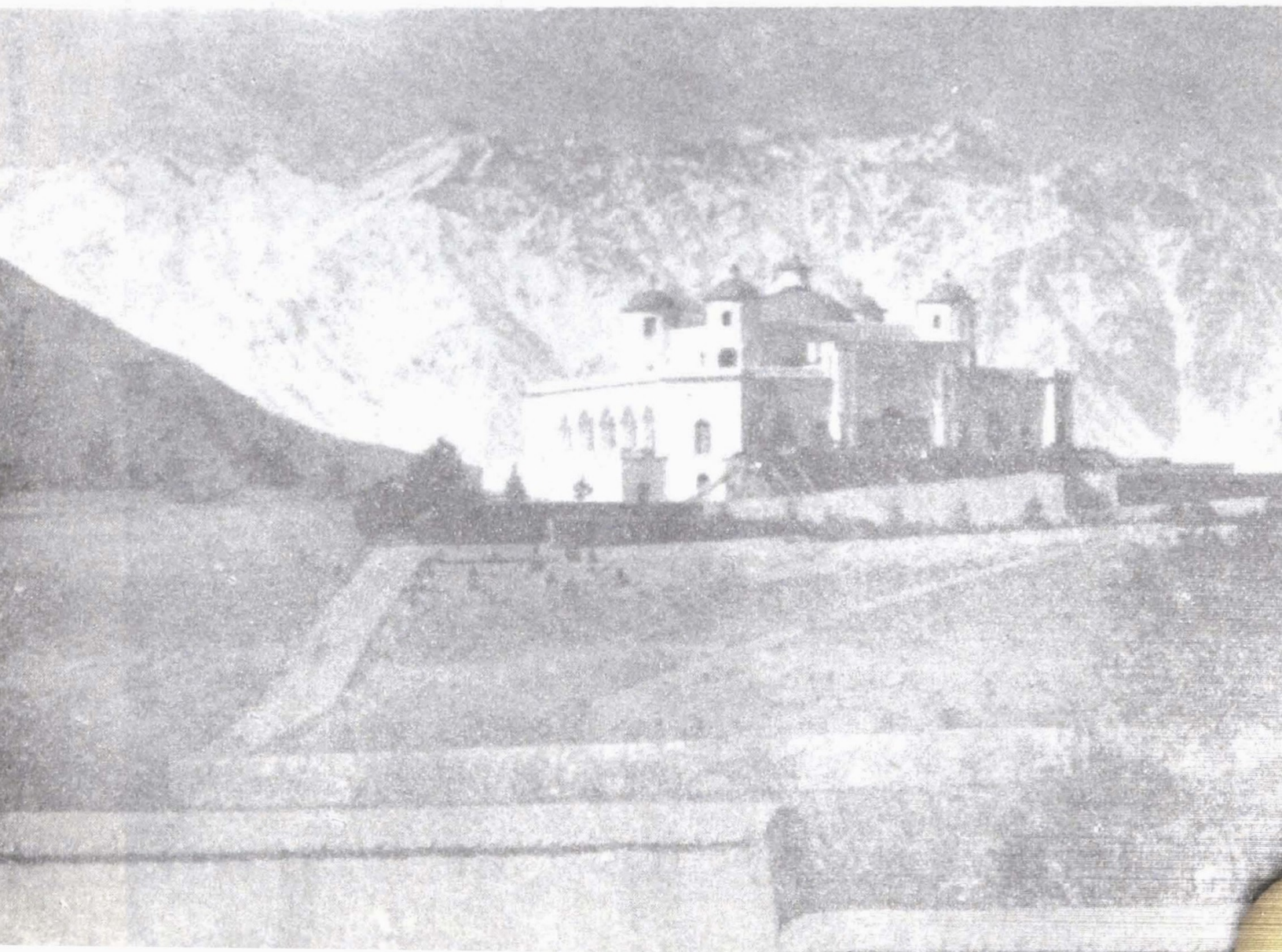
Entrance to the Sherpur Mosque; *Afghan Tourist Organization*



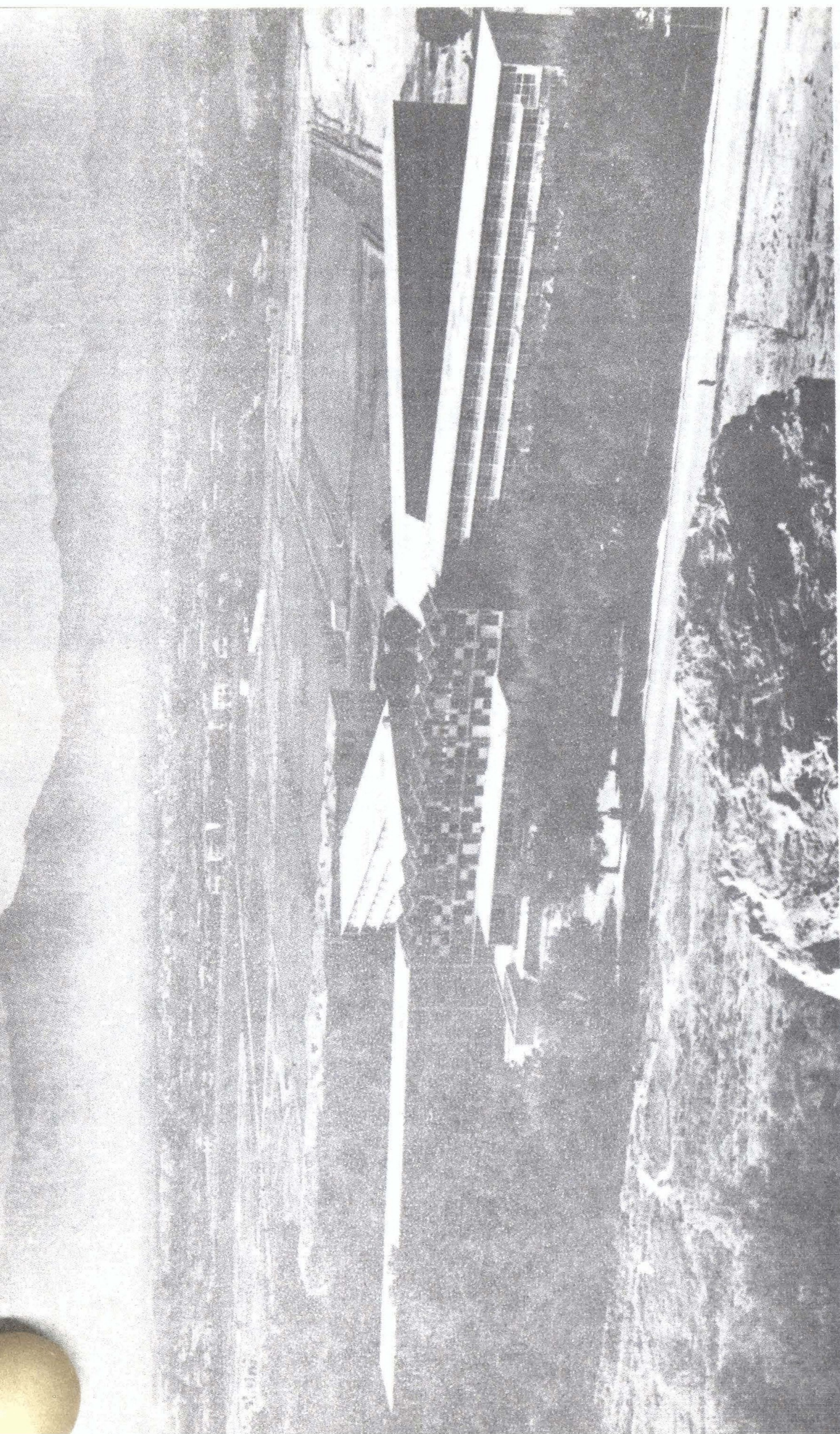


Hotel Inter Continental; *Afghan Tourist Organization*

Bagh-i-Bala; *A.D. Wolfe*







Dormitory, Kabul University with Chahrdeh in distance; *Afghan Film*



The large Huq Murad rug serai is located on the other side of the fruit bazaar. It is hoped that present plans to establish a rug museum in this serai will materialize in the very near future.

[12] At the bend in the road beyond the rug serai, beautiful trees poke their heads above high walls on the right. This is the Ladies' Garden of Shahrara, a favorite picnic ground for the ladies of Kabul who gather here in great numbers on Fridays and holidays. No gentlemen allowed.

[13] The Salang Highway which begins at Zarnegar Park by the side of the Ministry of Education, Tour I, [11], passes along the side wall of the Shahrara Garden. This section of the highway will run through to the Khair Khana Pass but it is currently under construction and impassable. Another new road under construction in this area will pass over a low saddle in the Asmai Heights on the left. This will be a great boon for the city since the present routes around either end of Asmai are long and congested. This new road starts from the Salang Highway and will drop down into Aliabad in the vicinity of Kabul University, [30].

[14] Shahrara Wat changes its name officially to Mir Bacha Khan Ghazi Wat at the Shahrara Garden but, as in most parts of Kabul, the official name is largely ignored and even unknown to many. Most people speak of this as Sarak-i-Parwan or Parwan Street because it leads to Karte Parwan, one of the city's fastest grow-



ing residential sections. Mir Bacha Khan is fittingly associated with this area, however, for he was a patriotic chief from Kohistan who fought against the British in 1879. At dawn on the 14th of December, for instance, the British General Roberts saw that vast numbers of riders were converging on the Asmai Heights from Chahrdeh, **Tour I**, [32] and the Koh Daman with their battle standards held high. He dispatched a contingent of British troops to seize the Conical Hill in the center of Asmai and from this position they succeeded at first in capturing the Afghan position on the high peak above but by afternoon the situation had changed drastically. Slowly, step by step, the British were forced to withdraw to the Conical Hill and then down its side to the plain below. "From that moment," says General Roberts in his autobiography, "I realized what is hard for a British soldier, how much harder for a British commander, to realize, that we were over-matched, and that we could not hold our ground." He then gave the order for all troops to retire behind the walls of the Sherpur Cantonments, **Tour IV**, [8] where they were besieged for nine days.

[15] To the right at the next traffic light note the large building of Naderia Lycee, a high school named after the late King Nadir Shah (r. 1929-1933), father of His Majesty King Zahir Shah, which was inaugurated in 1961.

[16] Take left fork (*right to British Embassy, Koh*

*Daman, Istalif. Charikar, Salang*). Here the road climbs a fairly steep slope and half-way up the rise note **Bagh-i-Bala Palace** atop a lush vine-covered hill to the right. To visit the palace turn right at top of rise, being careful to take the lower of two turnoffs. The upper road goes to Kabul Intercontinental Hotel, opened on 9 September, 1969. *If you do not wish to visit the palace, continue tour from [25].*

[17] Bagh-i-Bala figures extensively in the story of Kabul. It is said that there were Moghul gardens here, laid out by one of Emperor Jahangir's queens and that during the early years of the 19th century it was favoured by Kabul's aristocracy. Starting from Babur's Gardens they would ride on an afternoon through the Gardens of Chahrdeh to this hill where they would stop to drink a cup of wine while admiring the glorious view. They would then return to the city by way of the Chaman-i-Wazirabad [23].

[18] Then, in August, 1939 when Shah Shujah returned to this city accompanied by the British Army of the Indus, he camped at Bagh-i-Bala before formally entering the city. We can imagine this encampment, the infantry in black shakos above scarlet coats with white cross belts, and the Horse Artillery even more dashingy attired in brass dragoon helmets with leopard-skin rolls, white buckskin breeches and high black jack boots. With these uniforms the troops imparted a colourful variety to the sober hues of their surroundings.

[19] Colour really sparkled and dazzled under a bright sun at 3:00 the next afternoon when the Shah officially entered the city: "The King rode a handsome white Caboolee charger, decorated with equipments mounted with gold, in the Asiatic fashion. He wore the jewelled coronet of velvet in which he always appears in public, his costume ornamented on the arms and breast with a profusion of precious stones, whilst his waist was encircled with a broad and cumbrous girdle of gold, in which glittered rubies and emeralds not a few. The Shah was accompanied by the Commander-in-Chief, by the Envoy and Minister, and Sir Alexander Burnes, the two latter in full diplomatic costume. This dress consists of a cocked hat fringed with ostrich feathers, a blue frock coat with raised buttons, richly embroidered on the collar and cuffs, epaulettes not yielding in splendour to those of a field-marshal, and trowsers edged with very broad gold lace."

[20] Accounts of this episode present a problem not infrequently met with in research on this period. The above description is given by the ADC to General Cotton who was part of the parade. Another participant, however, says that "His Majesty was borne on an elephant, the howdah of which was of solid silver, and the caparisons crimson and gold." Whichever, both speak of the splendor in which Shah Shujah rode from Bagh-i-Bala to the Bala Hissar from which he had been exiled for thirty years. The people of Kabul turned



out for the pageant but their welcome to the puppet king was far from enthusiastic: they were all but silent.

[21] Again, when Amir Abdui Rahman (r. 1880-1901) returned from an extended campaign in the north he was welcomed back to the city on this rise where a temporary pavilion "gaily adorned with hangings of crimson and white and with large bouquets of flowers" had been erected for his reception. Greatly taken with the beauty of the spot, the Amir determined to build a palace a little higher up on the mountainside even though his advisers pointed out that this would disturb the final resting place of the **Pir-i-Baland** (High Saint). Work on the foundations continued for some weeks, only to be abruptly discontinued one morning. The court was amazed, and no little disturbed, but none dared at first to risk the monarch's wrath by inquiring into the matter. Curiosity ran high, however, and finally one brave soul approached and questioned the Amir who readily admitted that the Pir-i-Baland had appeared to him in a dream and smartly slapped his face. The sting of this chastisement still tingled when the Amir awoke convincing him that he would be well advised to choose another site for his palace. Flags fly above the tomb of Pir-i-Baland on a peak next to the hotel though they are barely visible now that the tomb has been enclosed within high stone walls. Thursday afternoon and Friday are popular visiting days for this shrine.

[22] The Amir built a pleasure palace in romantic

design with splashing fountains on its terraces and a large reflecting pool. This was his favorite retreat and he died here in 1901. Later on the palace became a museum and then it was used as a military hospital for some time before being totally abandoned. By the early 1960s it had fallen into ruin, most of the dome was caved in and the fallen stucco decoration lay crumbling on the floor. Serious plans to pull it down altogether were fortunately replaced by others with a sense of history, however, and the palace was handsomely restored in 1964 and furnished with many original pieces. The stucco and mirror-studded decoration of the interior faithfully represents the original; the beautiful rugs and chandeliers presented by His Majesty add the perfect touch of elegance. It is now Kabul's most attractive restaurant and many private and official receptions are held here. Moreover, many marriage ceremonies are performed under the glittering dome of Bagh-i-Bala in fitting continuation of its romantic tradition.

[23] From the front terrace of the palace one looks down toward the left upon the open spaces of the **Chaman-i-Wazirabad** (Meadows of Wazirabad) ringed by several mountain ranges. During the winter and spring these meadows are flooded to form a large lake which attracts flocks of migratory birds much to the delight of numerous hunters. Every year the city encroaches on the Chaman from all directions, however. The twin forts of **Kolola Pushta**, above [6], and **Shahrara**

on low hills in front of the palace stand guard over the trees and gardens of Sherpur and Shahr-i-Nau and the long hill of Sia Sang rises beyond, supporting the blue-domed mausoleum of King Nadir Shah (r. 1929-1933) on its southern corner. The mud-roofed village-suburb of Shahrara blends into the southern slope below the Shahrara fort shielded from the modern residential section of Karte Parwan by the trees of the Ladies' Garden of Shahrara and the palatial residence of the British Ambassador gleams whitely in the middle of extensive gardens filling the British Embassy compound.

[24] Another of Kabul's fast-growing suburbs, Afshar-i-Nananchi, lies directly at the foot of this hill. Nadir Shah Afshar, the Persian conqueror of Afghanistan and India, built a large garrison at this important approach to the city, in 1738. The fort no longer stands but many families in the area trace their descent from those Qizilbash troops stationed here over two hundred years ago and some still speak a distinct Turkoman dialect among themselves.

[25] Return to main road. Turn right and proceed downhill to next junction. On your right note the extensive grounds and attractive modern buildings of the **Polytechnic Institute**, a part of Kabul University, which opened in 1968. This Institute is assisted by the USSR and trains engineers in construction, geology, mining and petroleum.

[26] Turn left at junction. *Straight ahead to Kargha*



## *Lake and Paghman.*

[27] On your left is a tall Silo standing next to a modern bakery opened in 1955, with a second silo opened in 1964 beside it. The open fields and meadows on the right which stretch as far as the foot of the Paghman mountains, are destined to become the city's newest and largest (35 square kilometers) residential section called Khushhal Khan Mina. The name celebrates the famous 17th century warrior-poet from the Khatak tribe living in the vicinity of Attock fort on the Indus River. He lived his life in fierce opposition to the Moghul Emperor Aurangzeb and his Pashto poems sing with passion of Afghan pride and honor.

“In Emperor Aurangzeb's reign  
You see a rosary in every hand;  
But God alone knoweth best  
If 'tis virtue or hypocrisy.”  
(trans. K. Mohmand)

[28] Continue to petrol station at Koti Sangi or Maidan-i-Mir Wais as it has more recently been named. Turn left around the petrol station. *Right to Paghman, Ghazni.*

[29] You are now on Jadi Mir Wais, a broad avenue named for an early 18th century mayor of Qandahar who led the tribes against the Safavids ruling from Persia. The successful revolt took place in April, 1709, and Mir Wais ruled at Qandahar until his death in 1715.

His son Mahmud led a conquering Afghan army to take the Safavid throne at Isfahan and the Afghans ruled Persia until 1730 when they were unseated by Nadir Shah Afshar who came to take the Afghan area in 1738. All these maneuvers were a prelude to the establishment of an Afghan Empire by Ahmad Shah Durrani of Qandahar in 1747 after Nadir Shah Afshar was assassinated in the same year. Mir Wais may be credited, however, with imbuing the tribes with a sense of national destiny for the first time.

[30] Continue down Jadi Mir Wais passing Deh Bori circle, to next intersection on the left which is the entrance to **Kabul University**.

[31] Turn left. On your right you will note a tall monument of slender black-marble columns which is the Makbara-i-Jamaluddin Afghani or **Tomb of Jamaluddin Afghani**. Philosopher, writer, orator and journalist, this remarkable man entered the service of Amir Dost Mohammad as tutor to the heir designate, Sher Ali Khan. The fratricidal disputes following Amir Dost Mohammad's death in 1863, however, so frustrated Jamaluddin's desires for reform and modernization, that he left Afghanistan late in 1868 to begin a life of extensive travel, much of it occasioned by exile, through India, Iran, Egypt, Turkey, England, France and Russia. As he travelled he wrote and lectured on the need for a Muslim revival encompassing the unification of all Muslim states into a single Caliphate. His ideas

often brought him into conflict with the establishment, especially when it was foreign dominated, but from them burgeoned the nationalist movements which have shaped the destiny of so many of the countries in which he resided. He died in Constantinople in 1897 where he was buried until December, 1944 when his remains were carried to Kabul and placed here on 2 January, 1945. For all that has been written by and of Jamaluddin Afghani, considerable controversy rages over the place of his birth. The Afghan tradition claims that he was born in the Kunar Valley in 1838.

[32] The monument to Jamaluddin Afghani was completed in 1968 and on 15 June, 1970 his Majesty Malik Faisal, King of Saudi Arabia, laid the foundation stone of an Islamic Research Center which will be built with this monument at its heart.

[33] Continue to a tree-filled island in the center of campus which is a favorite meeting place for students. Enrollment in 1971 was about 5000. The central administration building which also includes the Faculty of Letters is on the right; several buildings belonging to the Faculty of Medicine stand to the left and just before the Administration building. The College of Medicine was the first college of the university to be founded by King Nadir Shah in 1932. Subsequent faculties scattered throughout the city were later joined to form Kabul University in 1942. There was no central campus, however, until all the faculties moved to this campus



in 1964.

[34] Passing the tree-filled island, turn left around a monument commemorating the establishment of the College of Medicine by Nadir Shah and drive to the end of this shady street noting the gymnasium and the dormitory which houses 1100 students, both of which stand to the left. Make a U-turn where the avenue of trees end and return to the College of Medicine monument noting the various buildings belonging to Aliabad Hospital, also established by King Nadir Shah, on the hillside to the left above the monument.

[35] Continue straight ahead past the Administration building, the Library, the Faculty of Agriculture and the Faculty of Engineering. All these buildings were built in 1964 with assistance from the USA.

[36] As you approach the end of this road note the Ministry of Agriculture on your left. The blue - domed Ziarat-i-Sakhi on the hillside straight ahead will also attract your attention. This is an extremely important shrine in Kabul, especially for the Shia community, for the holy Cloak of the Prophet rested in a natural basin on top of a large stone now enshrined here. The Cloak had been obtained in 1768 from the Amir of Bokhara by Ahmad Shah Durrani (r. 1747-1772) as part of a treaty settling the northern boundaries. It is now enshrined at Qandahar, Ahmad Shah's capital, but while it was kept in Kabul for a few days during the journey it is said that Hazrat Ali, cousin and son-in-

law of the Prophet Mohammad, came to pay his respects to the holy relic. For this reason the shrine is sometimes also referred to as Qadamgah Hazrat-i-Shah or the Place Where Hazrat Ali Placed His Foot, i.e., visited. Sakhi (Generous One) is another title of Hazrat Ali. Because of these associations with Hazrat Ali the whole university area is generally referred to as Aliabad.

[37] Each year on Nauroz or New Year's Day (21 March), a large fair is held at the Ziarat-i-Sakhi and thousands gather in festive new clothing to visit the shrine and picnic on the hillside. The Janda or Sacred Flag is raised in front of the shrine with great ceremony on the first day. It flies for forty days and is then returned to the shrine until the next Nauroz. After the solemnity of the opening ceremonies, the hillside echoes with the voices of countless hawkers calling out the merits of their wares and the delighted screams of little ones spinning around on carousels and merry-go-rounds, and the air is perfumed with the scent of all manner of food specialties being cooked on the spot. Visitors welcome.

[38] The high peak on the Asmai Heights above the shrine is called **Tapa Salaam**, the Hill of Greeting, for it has long been a tradition for travellers to bow in greeting to the Ziarat-i-Sakhi on crossing over the pass. The practice no doubt dates from pre-Islamic times for the hillside beside the shrine is strewn with Buddhist remains dating from the early centuries A.D. which are,

however, now covered for the most part by modern Muslim graves. A new road currently under construction will cross over Asmai via the pass at Tapa Salaam.

[39] Take first road to right and return to Jadi Mir Wais. Turn left to pass by the Afghan Institute of Technology (A.I.T.) and Ghazi High School on your left. This will bring you to the stoplight at Deh Mazang Circle where the Minar-i-Abdul Wakil Khan stands. Here you may:

turn right, to visit the Kabul Museum, Tour I, [42];  
proceed straight ahead and right after bridge, to visit Babur's Tomb, Tour I, [20]:

proceed straight ahead and left after bridge, to return to center of town.





## **TOUR IV**

### **TO THE AIRPORT**

#### **OF SPECIAL INTEREST**

**Royal (Arg) Palace [2]**

**Cantonment Sites: 1841 [13], 1879 [8]**

**Bemaru Heights [11]**

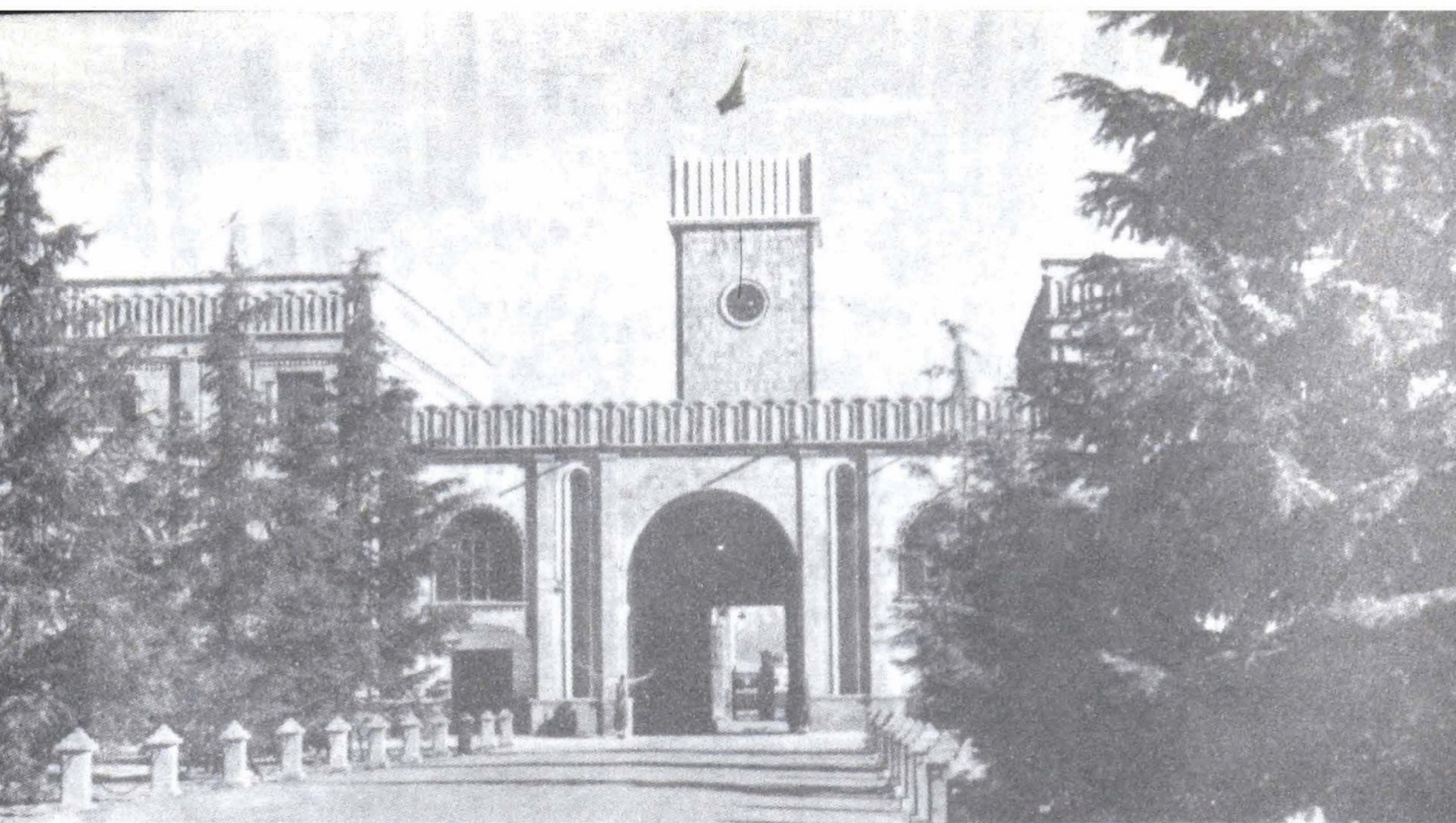
[1] A broad avenue called Jadi Khwaja Abdullah Ansari, and named for the great 11th century philosopher of Herat, leaves Pushtunistan Square in a north-easterly direction and proceeds directly to the Airport Terminal opened on 11 May, 1963.

[2] The Ministry of Mines and Industries and the Cartographic Institute, both opened in 1963, stand to the right as you leave Pushtunistan Square, and the long facade of the Royal Guard Headquarters lines the avenue on the left. They form a part of the outer walls of the **Royal Palace** also called the **Arg**, the Turkish word for citadel. The Arg was built by Amir Abdur Rahman (r. 1880-1901) in 1883 for, as he says in his autobiography, "I, as King of the country; had to face the difficulty of having no house to live in ... Until the

time that I built a new palace for myself, I lived in tents and borrowed mud-houses belonging to my subjects.” The Arg was originally surrounded by a wide moat and well-fortified. During the disturbances culminating in Bacha Saqao’s take over of Kabul in 1929, the palace buildings were heavily damaged by shell and fire necessitating considerable restoration by King Nadir Shah (r. 1929-1933) and further enlargement by His Majesty King Zahir Shah.

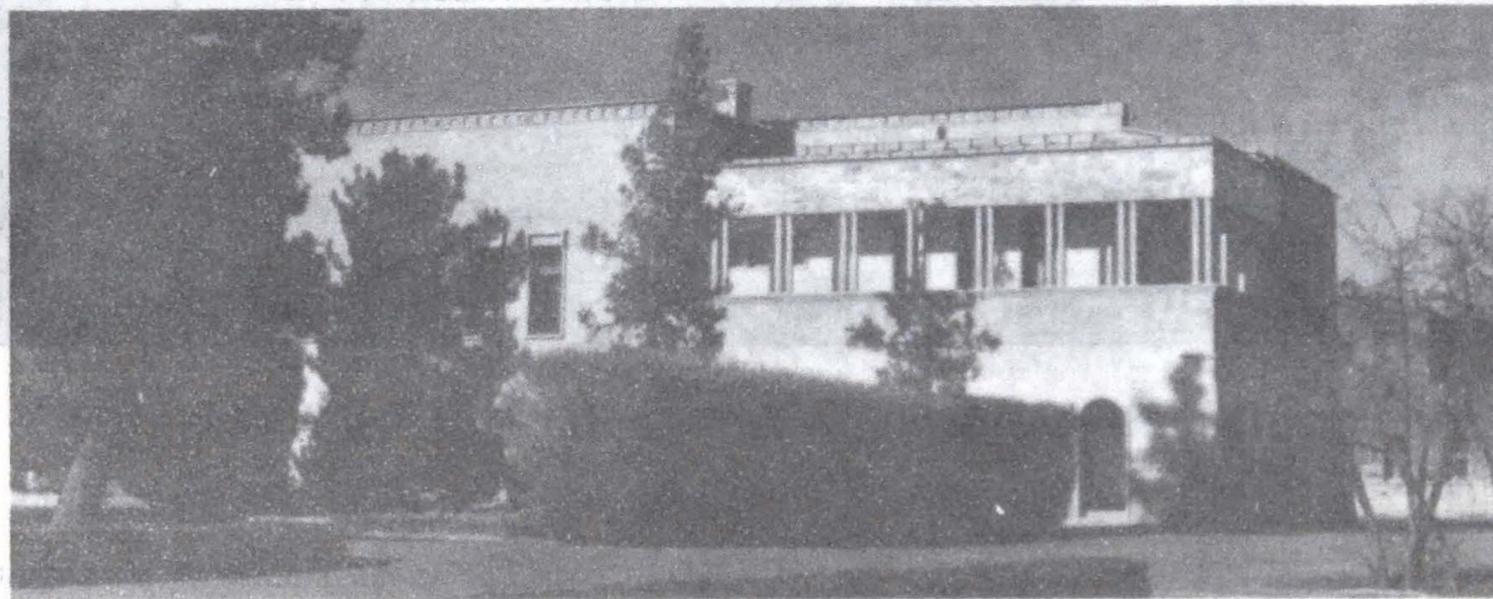
[3] The first gate is the main entrance to the Palace and it was designed by His Majesty. Through it one may glimpse the imposing inner gateway with His Majesty’s standard flying from its central tower. The Royal Flag is red and one side is emblazoned with the Afghan coat of arms in white. This emblem consists of a domed mosque with two minarets, a pulpit and a prayer nich inside, and two banners flanking it on either side. 1348, the Afghan religious Hijra date (1929 A.D.) the founder of this dynasty, King Mohammad Nadir Shah, ascended the throne, is inscribed below the mosque. This central design is encircled by a sheaf of wheat symbolizing the wreath of wheat with which Ahmad Shah Durrani was crowned in 1747 A.D. On the other side, the flag bears His Majesty King Zahir Shah’s seal (*tughra*) in the center. *Al-Mutawakel’ al-Allah (To Trust in God)*, His Majesty’s title, appears above and to the right of the seal and below it *Da Afghanistan Badshah*, King of Afghanistan, is written in Pashto. *To right, Independence Avenue. Tour II. [52].*



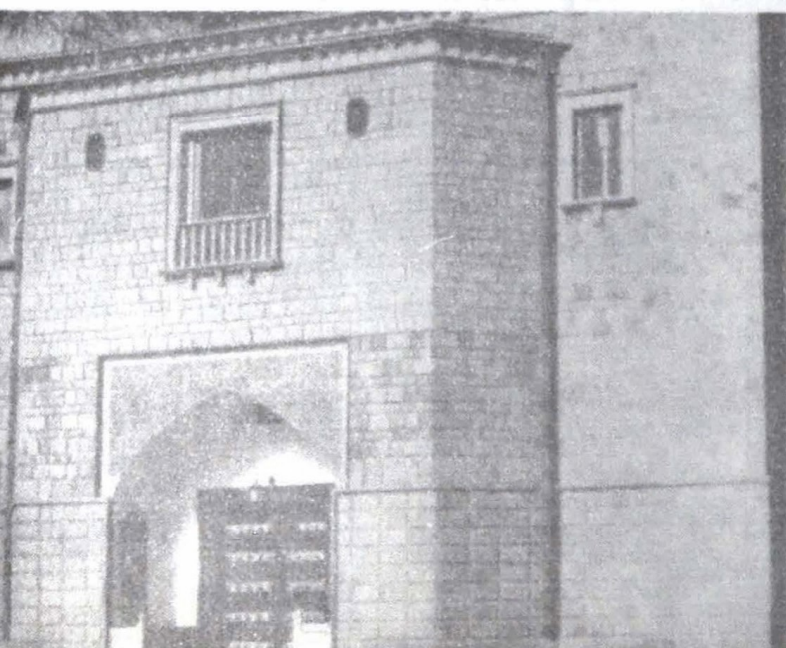


The Arg Palace Gates as viewed from the inner Courtyard; *H.E. Klappert*

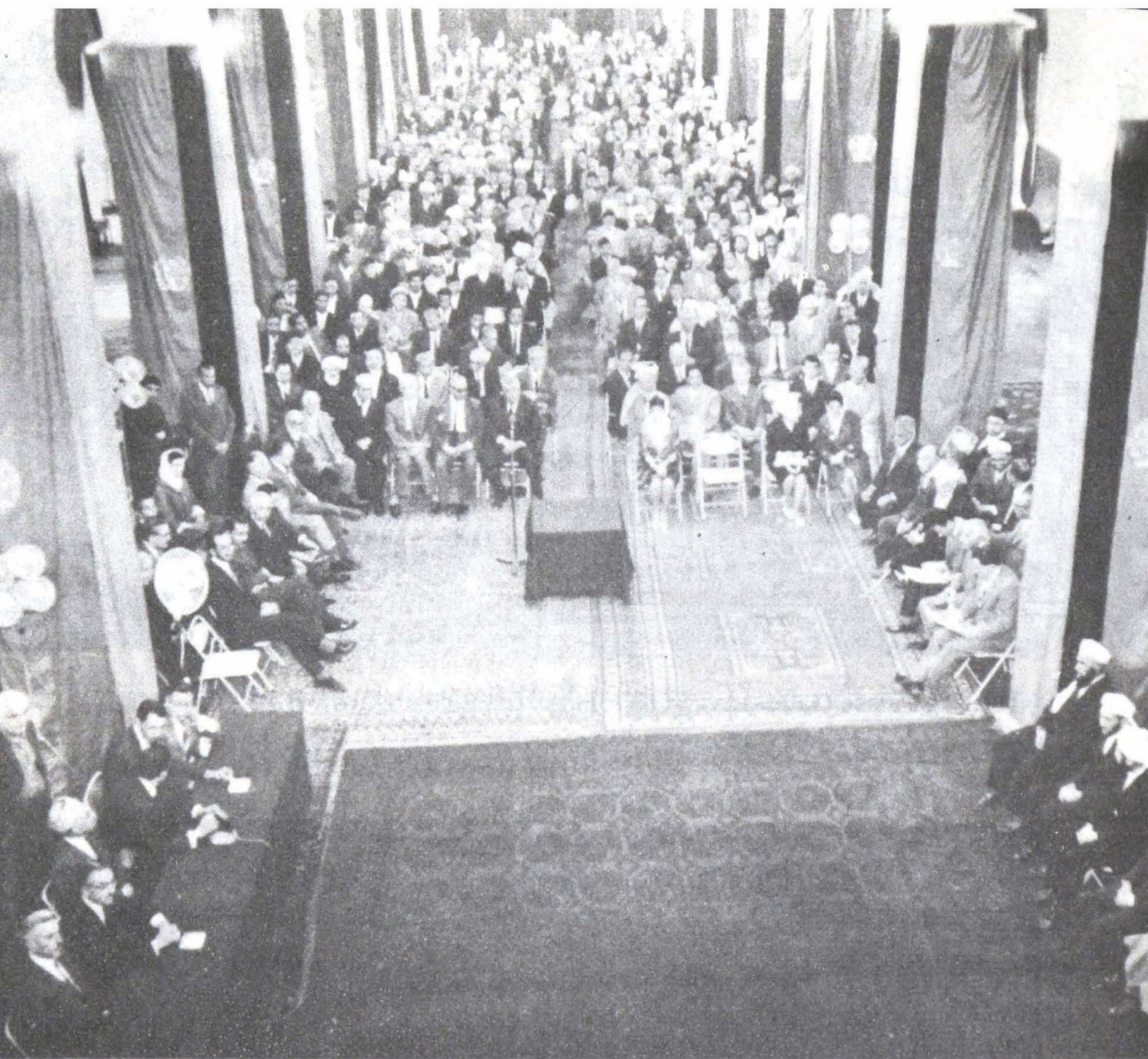
The Royal Offices, Arg Palace: *H.E. Klappert*



The Royal Apartments, Arg Palace; *H.E. Klappert*

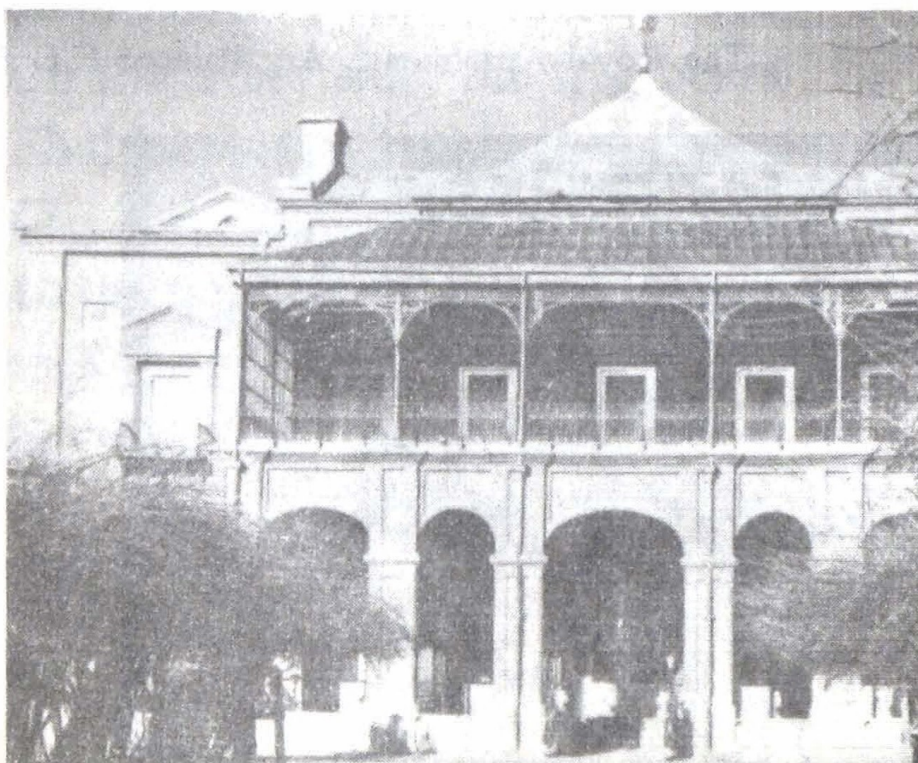






The Loya Jirga meets in the Salaam Khana in 1964; *J. Bedford*

Dilkusha Palace; *H.E. Klappert*





**[4]** The second gate gives entrance to the Salaam Khana (Hall of Public Audience) a long lofty building with pillared verandah which has seen many glittering assemblies since the days of Amir Abdur Rahman, including the coronations of the Kings of Afghanistan since Amir Habibullah (1901). It served as the seat of the National Assembly prior to the completion of the National Assembly building on Darulaman Avenue, **Tour I. [41]** and in September, 1964 the members of the Loya Jirgah met here to consider and adopt a new Constitution for Afghanistan. On religious and national holidays His Majesty sits in audience here.

**[5]** Through the third gate one may see the Dilkusha (Heart's Delight) Palace designed by the English architect Mr. Finlayson for Amir Habibullah in 1907. State receptions are held here and Ambassadors to the Royal Court of Afghanistan present their credentials to his Majesty King Zahir Shah within its halls. It was on the lawn of this palace that King Nadir Shah was assassinated by a student on 8 November while attending a prize-giving ceremony for the graduating classes of 1933. The Palace buildings are not open to the public.

**[6]** At the crossroads, the Ariana Hotel stands on the right and on the left new buildings for Nejat High School, presently situated beside the Kabul River at Pul-i-Shah-do-Shamshira, **Tour I, [13]**, near completion. Nejat was established in 1920 with a staff of German teachers and the Federal Republic of Germany continues to assist



this important educational institution.

[7] Less than five years ago the area between this corner and the hill of Bemaru, below [11], beyond was an empty plain; today it is an important residential section called Wazir Khan Mina after that dashing son of Amir Dost Mohammad (r. 1826-1839; 1843-1863) who played such a leading role in the Afghan revolt against the British and who deposed and exiled his father in 1839 during the First Anglo-Afghan War. At that time this side of Kabul was famed for its many gardens with imposing gateways, the most famous being the half-mile square Bagh-i-Shah (King's Garden) dating from the reign of Timur Shah (r. 1773-1793). Bagh-i-Shah encompassed the area now occupied by Nejat School.

[8] The gardens of the early 19th century began to give way to the city during the end of that same century, however, when another of Amir Dost Mohammad's sons, Sher Ali, came to the throne in 1863 (r. 1863-1866; 1868-1879) and began to build a new city at the foot of Bemaru which he named **Sherpur** in his own honor. Massive 20-foot high walls with fortified bastions and turretted gateways had already been completed when the British came to take over Kabul for the second time, in October 1879 during the Second Anglo-Afghan War. The British army came to avenge the massacre of a British Representative and his escort which had taken place in the Bala Hissar a month earlier,

and they made over Sherpur into a **cantonment** for their troops, renaming the great entranceway Roberts' Gate after the occupation commander, General Roberts, who was later to be known as Roberts of Qandahar for his heroic march from Kabul to relieve the besieged fort of Qandahar after a disastrous British defeat at Maiwand in July, 1880.

[9] Punishment for anti-British activity in Kabul was harsh during General Roberts' rule and one day 26 Afghans were shot by the British authorities just outside Roberts' Gate. You will find a **small monument** erected by Amir Abdur Rahman (r. 1880-1901) on the very spot where the execution took place, on the corner opposite the Nejat High School, diagonally across from the Ariana Hotel. The British withdrew from Kabul in August, 1880, after formally handing over the Kingdom of Kabul to Amir Abdur Rahman on the 11th.

[10] All construction from this period has disappeared, however, for King Amanullah (r. 1919-1929) cleared the entire area in order to build Kabul's first airport. When Bacha Saqao rose against the King and began to bombard the city, the British evacuated the foreign community from this airfield during history's first airlift. The small planes came from a base in Iraq to Peshawar and from there the pilots flew over the mountains with great daring and many difficulties. Engines were constantly icing up and several landed on remote hill tops but fortunately these planes were

more readily repairable than their modern counterparts. One pilot who smashed the tail of his plane while making an emergency landing in Jalalabad, for instance, simply enlisted the aid of a carpenter and flew off safely a day or so later. A total of 586 persons were flown out of Kabul between the 25th of December, 1929 and the 25th of February, 1929.

[11] The long hill of **Bemaru** formed the northern defense of Sherpur. Its name is a modern corruption of Bibi Mahru or the Moon-Faced Lady, a sister of Sayid Mehdi Atesh Nafas (Fiery Breath) whose shrine is located behind the American Embassy. The Sayid was a most respected personality of Kabul who died in 1541 and his shrine is frequently visited by women seeking relief for ailing children.

[12] According to legend Bibi Mahru died of a broken heart on hearing that her betrothed had been killed in battle. The young chieftain recovered from his wounds, however, and returned to remain faithful to her memory for the rest of his life. When he died he was laid to rest beside his beloved and today flags fly above their tombs on the summit at the eastern end of the hill.

[13] The low walls surrounding the tombs were built by the British, according to the residents of Bemaru Village which lies at the foot of the hill below them, and there is no doubt that the battle of Bemaru was one of the more crucial events of the First Anglo-Afghan War (1838-1842). Lady Sale describes this battle most graphi-



cally in her diary for she watched the entire proceedings from the roof of her bungalow in the **cantonments** which the British had built along the right side of the modern road. The cantonment walls began in the vicinity of the Italian Embassy not far from the Ariana Hotel, the site of the commissariat which had been built *outside* the walls of the cantonment. The early loss of the commissariat contributed greatly to the terrible suffering of those last days in Kabul. Envoy Macnaghten's private compound was about where a new road cuts through from the airport road to the Jalalabad road, and General Sale's compound was just north of Macnaghten's. The cantonment was plundered and burned after the British left it on the 6th of January, 1842. No trace remains. Those interested in the British retreat of 1842 will find the detailed accounts of Lady Sale, Eyre, Diver, Macrory and Norris fascinating (see Bibliography).

[14] Today several government buildings line this road. Starting at the stoplight at the Ariana Hotel one finds: the Ariana Hotel to the right, Nejat High School to the left, followed by the Italian Embassy on the right and Afghan Films, the Air Authority, Radio Afghanistan the American Embassy and the Public Health Institute to the left. The paved road to the left beside the Health Institute leads to the Wazir Akbar Khan Hospital and the Children's Hospital now under construction with assistance from India. The Wazir Akbar Khan Hospital was opened in 1964 and is assisted by the Czechoslovak

Socialist Republic.

[15] Qala-i-Jahgi (War Castle), an army barracks, stands beyond the Health Institute but after passing through the village of Bemaru the city comes to an end, to be replaced by a pastoral landscape filled with fields dotted by high-walled villages.

## **TOUR V**

### **SOME HOLY SHRINES**

#### **INCLUDING:**

**Ziarat-i-Ashukhan-o-Arefan [2]**

**Cheshme Roshnayi [7]**

**Ziarat-i-Khwaja Safa [10]**

**Ziarat-i-Pir-i-Akram Khan [15]**

THIS is a most pleasant and rewarding tour for those who are interested in the holy shrines of Kabul and for those who enjoy a short afternoon's climb. The view from Khwaja Safa is impressive. There are, however, no spectacular "sights" and this tour is included more for those who wish to know Kabul more intimately than for the casual tourist. It is recommended that you take an Afghan friend or a guide with you.

[1] Proceeding west from the Maiwand Monument on Jadi Maiwand, take first lane to left (south) through the Kitab Firoshi (Book Market) marked at its entrance by shops festooned with paper decorations for engagement and wedding ceremonies. Turn right at the end



of this street and take the next left to the Behzad Cinema which you will find on the right. Park car in the cinema compound.

[2] Leaving the Cinema, turn right and walk up the hill. As the path curves you will find a graveyard on the right and a narrow covered alley to your left which bring you to the courtyard of the **Ziarat-i-Ashukhan-o-Arefan**.

[3] The Ziarat is dedicated to two brothers, sons of Khwaja Jaber, **Tour II, [41]**, who was the son of the great Herati poet and divine, Khwaja Abdullah Ansari. They were called to Ghazni by the Ghaznavid king, Bahram Shah, during the early years of the 12th century. From Ghazni they came to Kabul where they became the city's spiritual leaders. Babur mentions this shrine in his Memoirs. Today they are looked upon as the protectors of the city and are held responsible for its prosperity.

[4] Local legend, however, identifies Ashukan and Arefan as the much-loved sons of Zubair who had been appointed Governor of Kabul by General Abdur Rahman ibn Samura, commander of the first Islamic army to enter Kabul about 644 A.D. As you will note below, the legends relating to most of the shrines on this hill refer to this early Arab invasion of the city. Zubair had a difficult role to play for although the city had been taken, the Hindu King Aradj refused to accept the new religion. He was a beneficent king and he once

constructed a huge *tandoor* or oven so that he might feed all of his subjects on feast days. One day while inspecting the oven in the company of Zubair, the king suddenly turned to the governor and said, "Do you think your God would protect your sons if they were thrown into this oven?" Zubair assured him that Allah would most certainly protect the innocents and the king promised that if this was so he would accept Islam. On the day of the frightful test the two little ones were led into the oven where they remained for an hour while the horrified witnesses waited in tense silence. When the great doors were finally opened a wondrous sigh spread through the crowd as the boys stepped forward, each holding a narcissus which they presented to the king who was converted immediately. The protective mantle with which the brothers were blessed that day continues to safe-guard Kabul.

[5] Upon entering the courtyard you will find two buildings. The tomb of Khwaja Abdus Samad, known as Arefan (Spiritually Enlightened), the elder brother, lies straight ahead but Arefan decreed that one should always visit his younger brother's tomb first. Turning, therefore, to the tomb of Khwaja Abdus Salam, known as Ashukhan (Lover), note the workmanship of the ceiling, hung with mosque lamps and large coloured glass balls, and the carved pillars of the spacious veranda. Removing your shoes, you pass into an unusual wooden corridor through an intricately carved

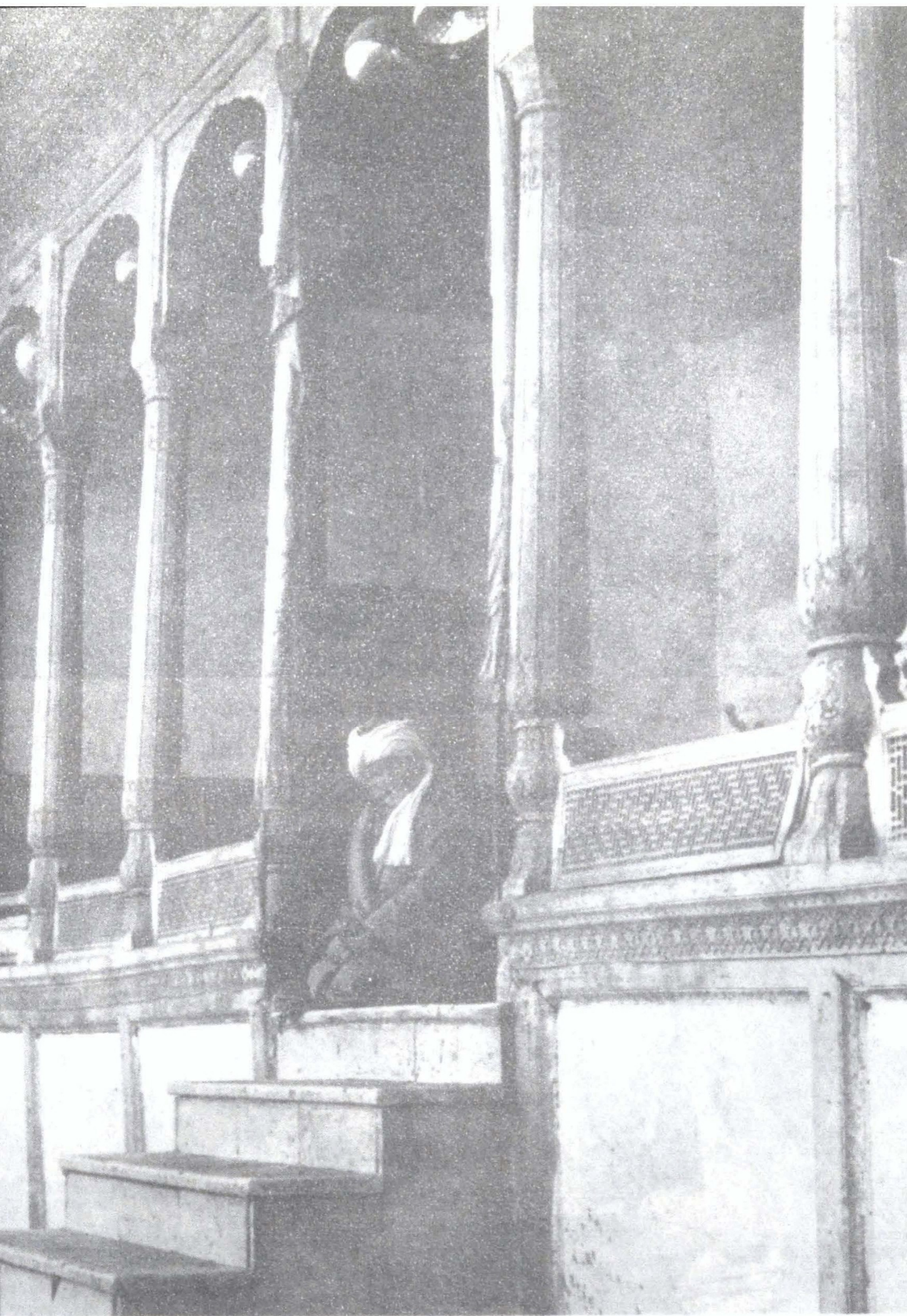
doorway, studded with horseshoes, over which there is an inscription relating to the construction of the building in the 18th century by Mahmud Shah (r. 1800-1803; 1809-1818) son of Timur Shah. The corridor leads you to the tomb which is surrounded by a high wooden screen presented by Amir Habibullah (r. 1901-1919) to replace one that had burned down. The tomb itself is very long and covered with embroidered cloths.

[6] The tomb of Arefan is similar although there is no corridor leading to it. Next to it there is a mosque from the upstairs veranda of which one may look down upon the tomb with its tall pennant standards. A small contribution on leaving is appropriate.

[7] Returning to the path, continue about a quarter of the way up the hill to a spring where a simple square construction stands under a clump of trees. This is Khwaja Roshnayi also known as Khwaja Wafa or **Cheshme Roshnayi**.

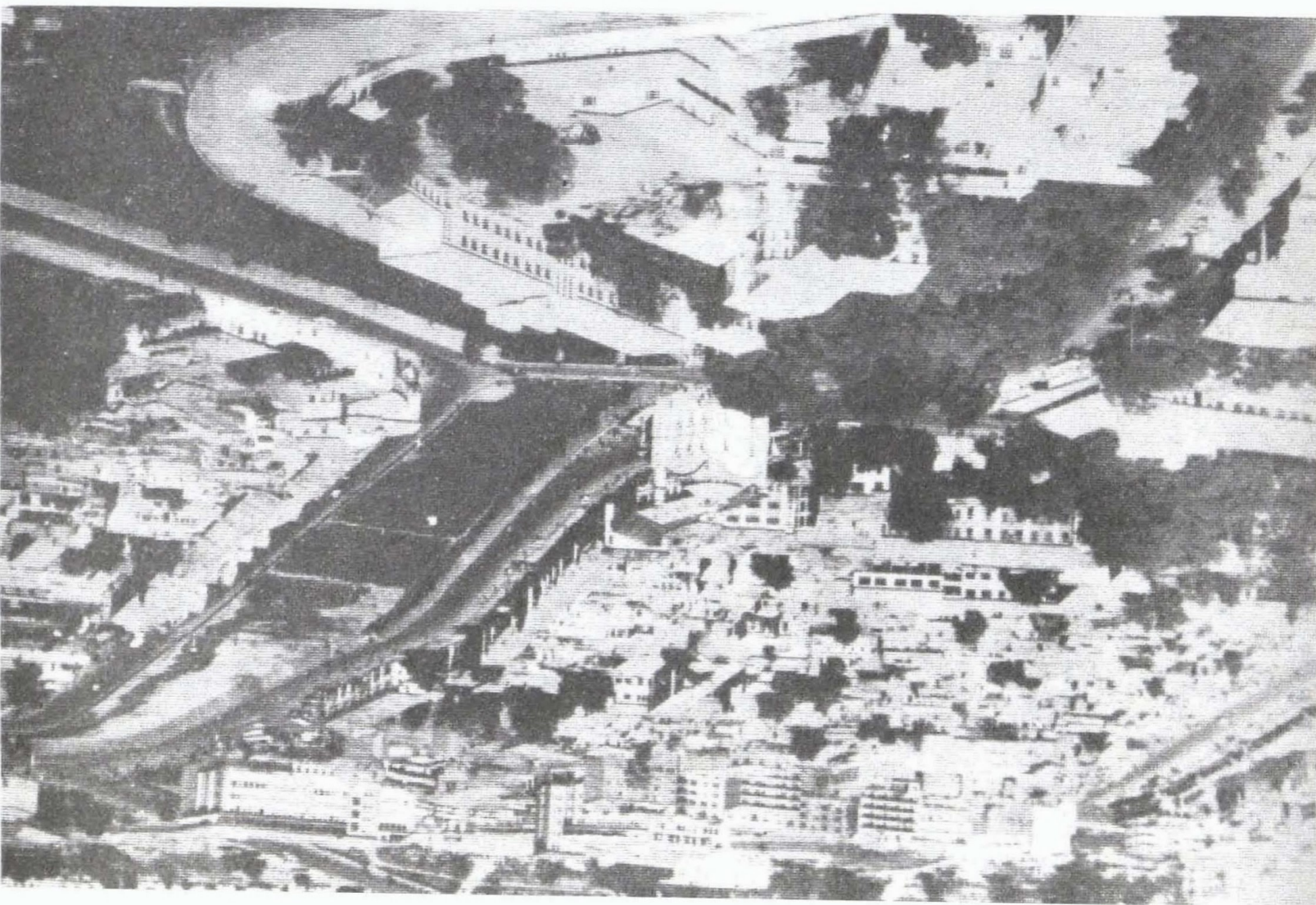
[8] There are three legends about who lies here. One says that Safa, of the shrine above, and Wafa were two soldiers killed during the first Islamic invasion of Kabul (c. 644). The second, a variation of the first, says that two members of the first Islamic army were killed on this mountain: Roshnayi, the Bearer of the Torch, and Safa, the Bearer of the Broom. The third again refers to Safa and Wafa, saying they were two sons of Khwaja Abdullah Ansari and therefore uncles of Ashukhan and Arefan. Babur refers to this spring



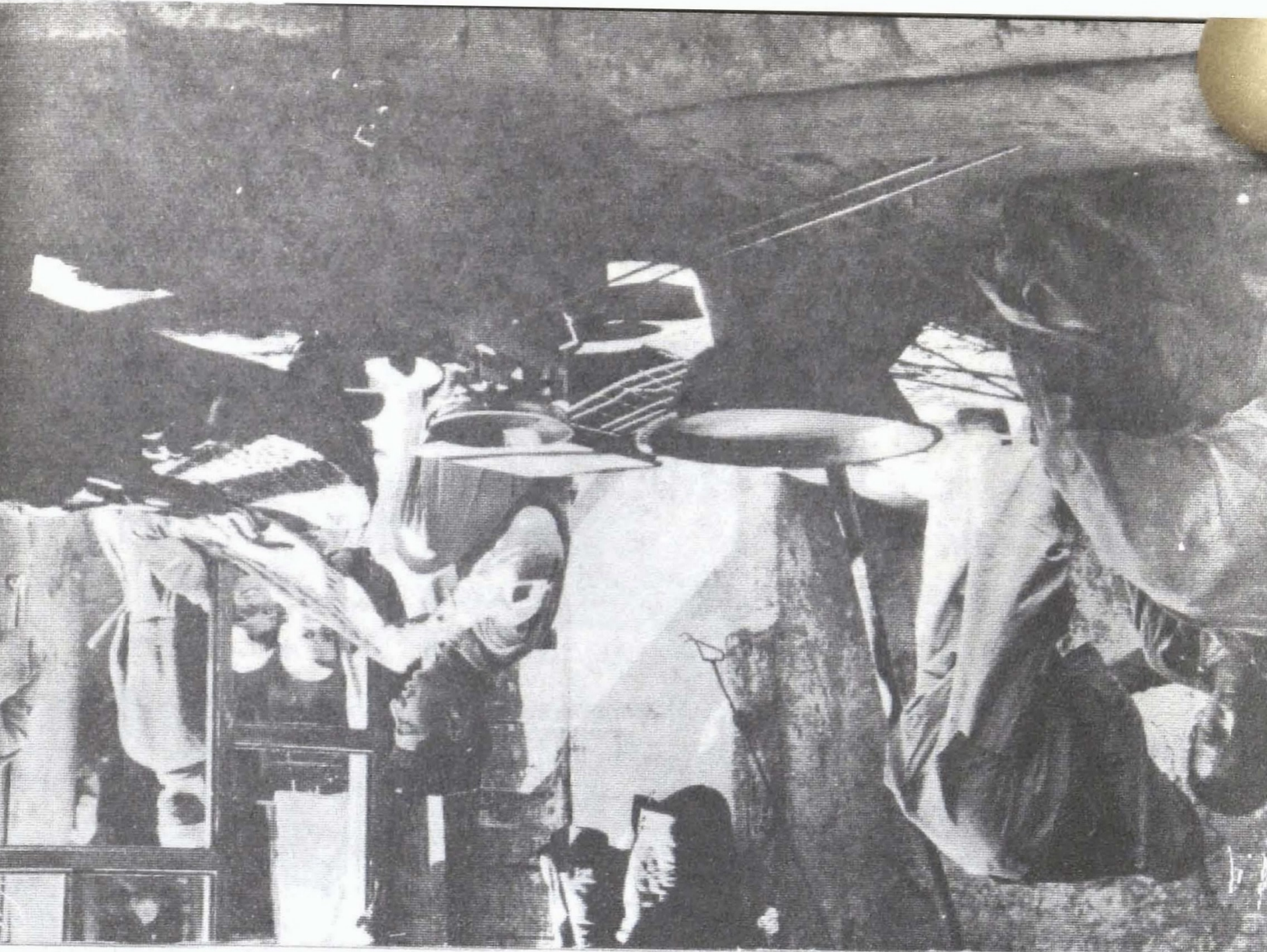


Entrance to the Tomb of Ashukhan at the Ziaret-i-Ashukhan-o-Aretan: ; A.D. Wolfe





*Kabul Panorama ; J. Tobias*



*Nan shop (see Afghan Dishes section); J. Powell*



as Cheshme Roshnayi.

[9] One enters by way of a very low doorway scarcely one meter high over which there is a small square window. The walls and the dome are constructed of large slabs of stone set without mortar. The transition from the square chamber to the circular dome has been achieved by the simple expedient of placing a piece of wood across each corner. The conception of using gradually decreasing circles to close the orifice of the dome, produces an interesting effect best seen with a flashlight. The tomb itself, very long as is so often the case with the tombs of saints, is simply covered with clay. The head and foot stones of undressed stone have no inscription or decoration.

[10] Continue by a wide well-defined path. Upon reaching **Ziarat-i-Khwaja Safa** you will find a long inscription by Amir Habibullah dated 1905 on the bank to your left. During the spring when the Arghawan [Red-bud] flowers the gardens of Khwaja Safa were much frequented by the Amirs. While Amir Habibullah was carrying out improvements, including the present buildings, various Buddhist artifacts were found which the Amir added to his collection of the unusual in a special palace storeroom.

[11] The buildings stand on the upper of three terraces. The Amir's reception room was at the western end. On the eastern end there is a charming spring mosque shaded only by a magnificent mulberry tree.



The south wall is honey-combed with niches for shoes.

[12] The actual shrine lies directly below the mosque where another lovely tree shades the unusually low door to the shrine. The tomb, here abnormally small instead of overly long, is covered with marble but undecorated. The niches on the south wall are attractively grouped in a manner common to Afghan tombs and are used for burning candles.

[13] East of the shrine there are three rooms set aside for lady visitors. In the main sitting room there is a tall window reaching to the floor which looks out over the shrine. These windows have four removable slats which may be removed in any desired combination and are one of the delights of indigenous Afghan architecture.

[14] Upon the hill above the terraces there is a tall circular tower which was once a dove-cote. White pigeons are kept at many shrines; you may see them at the Ziarat-i-Shah-do-Shamshira, and they are often housed in similar towers. Babur's father, as a matter of fact, fell to his death from just such a tower. This tower has been abandoned and it is therefore possible to study the interior. There is a circular pillar in the center with 90 nesting places and nesting places all around the walls, numbering 300 in all. Even if you are not interested in pigeons, visit the terrace in front of the tower for a view of Kabul quite different from any to be had anywhere else in the city.

[15] You may return via the **Ziarat-i-Pir-i-Akram Khan**, half way down on the west. The path to it is easily visible from the dove-cote. It begins outside the Amir's reception room.

[16] The shrine is dedicated to the Sufi Sher Muhammad (d. 1846), the spiritual guide of Amir Dost Muhammad's son, Akram Khan. Its form is quite different from the others seen on this tour. The tomb itself lies under an elaborate honey-combed half vault, the facade of which was originally decorated with colourful tile. Between the tomb and the adjoining mosque there is an open-work screen designed to permit the sound of the Koranic verses to pass over the tomb.

[17] There are a number of interesting items to note from here. The *jui*, built by Ulugh Beg, Babur's uncle, still carrying water, passes below you past a number of large craters called *yakhdan* and *barfdan*. The stone-lined *yakhdan* were used for making and storing ice. During the winter the crater was flooded, six inches at a time, and allowed to freeze. During the summer blocks of this ice would be cut and sold throughout the city. Similarly with the *barfdan*, which were packed with snow. The large walled enclosures at the foot of the hill, Bagh-i-Qazi and Bagh-i-Nawab, retain some small vestiges of the beauty for which Kabul's gardens were once famous.





## RESTAURANTS AND EVENING ENTERTAINMENT

A new phenomenon in Kabul has been the opening of many small restaurants and clubs which offer music and dancing. It seems as though a new one opens almost every week. This list can not, therefore, be complete but it presents the scene as of January, 1971.

**25 Hour Club**, west side of Shahr-i-Nau Park (Map III) Chinese cuisine a specialty, bar, dancing, occasional live bands.

**Bost**, Chahrahi Taurabaz Khan (Map III) - European dishes, bar, dancing, garden.

**Columbus**, one block west of Sherpur (Blue) Mosque (Map III) - chicken-in-the-basket a speciality. Afghan dishes, bar, garden.

**Gulzar**, sidestreet on north side of Shahr-i-Nau Park (Map III) - German cuisine a specialty, bar.

**Khyber Restaurant**, Pushtunistan Square (Map I) - cafeteria style, European dishes mainly.

**M+M Discotheque**, one block north of Chahrahi Ansari (Map III) - snacks, bar, dancing, open only after 8 p.m.

**Marco Polo**, sidestreet on south side of Shahr-i-Nau Park (Map III) - Afghan cuisine and chicken-in-the

basket, bar dancing, nomad tent in garden, Afghan *chaikhana* (teahouse) upstairs for typical atmosphere. Additional premises open on Chahrahi Taurabaz Khan (Map III).

**Pamir Room**, Intercontinental Hotel (Map, III) - European cuisine bar, dancing, frequent cabarets.

**Share Gholghola**, Across from Sherpur Mosque (Map III). European and Afghan cuisine. Afghan music.

**Spinzar Hotel Afghan Room**, Spinzar Hotel (Map, I) - Afghan decor, seating on mattresses on the floor, European and Afghan dishes, Afghan wine, excellent Afghan singer and instrumentalist, opens after 8 p.m. only.

**Tritone**, Karte Seh, 2nd block northwest of Parliament sign on Jadi Darulaman (Map I) - Italian cuisine, garden, music.

**Wakhan**, sidestreet on north side of Shahr-i-Nau Park (Map III) - European and Afghan dishes, bar, garden.

For those who would care to try typical Afghan restaurants we recommend the following. Since only Dari Persian is spoken in these restaurants it would be well to visit them in the company of an Afghan friend.

**Kababi Shops** - opposite Park Cinema, Shahr-i-Nau.

**Haft Rang Kabab** - at Koti Sang. Here you may try:

1. *Nai kabab* - chunks of lamb baked on a bamboo stick.

2. *Seekh kabab* - chunks of lamb broiled on a skewer over charcoal.
3. *Lola kabab* - ground lamb broiled on a skewer over charcoal.
4. *Karoyi kabab* - *kabab* with eggs, tomato and onion fried in lots of oil in an iron pan (*karoyi*), in which it is served.
5. *Pushti kabab* - baked rib of lamb which is toasted over charcoal and sprinkled with grape seeds just before serving.
6. *Tanduri kabab* - baked lamb slices.
7. *Dashi kabab* - pan-browned lamb on bone.

**Uzbek Restaurants** on Nadir Pushtun Wat, half way between Pushtunistan Square, and Pul-i-Khishti Bridge. These restaurants preserve much of the bustling atmosphere of the restaurants of the north. Here you may try:

*Tanduri*: baked lamb served with a small slice of fat from the fat-tail of the sheep, a delicious delicacy.

*Mantu*: a steamed dumpling stuffed with spiced minced-meat, covered with *chaka*, a sour cream preparation, and sometimes with carrots. May be ordered without the *chaka*.

*Kabab*, *pilau* and *korma* are also available, see section on Afghan dishes which follows.





## SOME AFGHAN DISHES

Contrary to the belief of many westerners living in Kabul, the Afghan cuisine is not limited to *kabab* and *pilau*. The following list includes only a few of the more interesting varieties. You will not find all of these in all restaurants, but if you are familiar with the variety it will make your eating experiences more interesting as you travel around the country.

**Ahshak:** a ravioli-type pasta stuffed with leeks and smothered with a meat sauce topped with sour cream (*chaka*). May be ordered with or without the *chaka*.

**Ash:** a hearty vegetable soup with spaghetti and kidney beans. May be ordered with or without *chaka*, sour cream.

**Bulani:** deep-fried nan-fritters stuffed with leeks.

**Chainaki:** lamb stew cooked in mended teapots in hot coals; mainly a village or small town dish.

**Chilao:** plain rice.

**Kabab:** many different kinds, but the two major types are:

*parcha kabab:* chunks of lamb, charcoal-broiled on skewers: *Lola kabab:* minced lamb broiled on skewers.

Liver (*ghigar*) and kidney (*gordar*), also charcoal-broiled, are served in many of the *kabab* shops. All of these *kababs* are served with *nan*, and an assortment of black pepper, paprika and crushed grape seeds (slightly sour in taste) which may be sprinkled on the *kabab* according to taste.

**Karoyi:** *kabab* cooked with eggs, tomatoes and onions in lots of oil. Brought to table in small iron dishes called *karoyi*. Served with *nan*.

**Korma:** lamb stew with vegetables in season; served with *nan* (a large portion) or with *pilau* (a small side dish).

**Nan:** the staple food in Afghanistan, a lightly leavened whole-wheat bread usually shaped in large oval flat loafs. In the north, however, they are round and plump.

**Mantu:** A northern specialty, *mantu* is a steamed dumpling, stuffed with spiced meat. It may be ordered with or without *chaka*, soui cream.

**Pilau:** There are many different kinds of *pilau* but in most restaurants it consists of rice cooked with meat and served with a small side-dish of *korma*.



## SHOPPING IN KABUL

This is not a complete shopping guide. Only the more convenient areas and only the more interesting items are listed. The richness of Kabul's bazaars is legend: they are as fascinating today as they have always been. We recommend departing from this general guideline so that you may experience the pleasure of discovering a favorite bazaar or an unique "find."

### GENERAL BAZAARS

**Near Spinzar Hotel (Tour I, [12]);** Antiques and handicrafts; electrical goods; stationery; medicines; sundries; plastics; knitted goods; textiles.

**Nadir Pustun Wat (Tour II, [1]);** Household goods; knitted goods; fruit; wild duck and partridge (in season); silver jewelry (side street east of bridge); chapans (side street west of bridge).

**Chahr Chatta Bazaar (Tour II, [4]);** Embroidered Qandahari vests; beaded and embroidered hats; turban silks; silver jewelry; textiles; crockery.

**Jadi Maiwand (Tour II, [6]);** Textiles; 2nd-hand clothing; gilim (rugs; 1st side street west of monument); household goods; film; brass and copper; paper flowers

(across avenue, just west of gilim street); pots and pans; crockery.

**Bagh-i-Umumi (Tour I, [59]);** Books and magazines; textiles, several serais specializing in sundries; 2nd-hand clothing. This broad street runs into the Mandawai, main grains bazaar (Tour I [52]).

**Jadi Wilayat (Tour I, [10]);** Posteen (fur-lined embroidered coats); furs; jewelry; textiles; antiques; imported household items.

**Chahrahi Saadarat (Tour I, [10]);** Antiques; jewelry; posteen; stationery; sundries; suitcases; shoes; photo equipment and film.

**Chahrahi Taurabaz Khan (Tour III, [2]);** Antiques; groceries; medicines; fruits and vegetables; Istalif pottery; Herat glass; alabaster; lapis lazuli; handicrafts; rugs and carpets; dry cleaners.

**Chahrahi Haji Yaqub (Tour III, [5]);** Antiques; rugs and carpets; photo equipment and film; groceries; boutiques.

**Muhammad Akbar Khan Wat (Tour II, [8]);** rugs and carpets; antiques.









## **EIGHT SHORT TRIPS OUTSIDE KABUL**

- A. Paghman - Kargha Lake**
- B. Istalif and the Koh Daman**
- C. The Salang Pass and Khinjan**
- D. Gulbahar and Kapisa**
- E. Tangi Gharu and the Lataband Pass**
- F. Guldara and Shewaki Buddhist Stupas**
- G. Ghazni**
- H. Hadda Site Museum**

**AFGHANISTAN** is a country of spectacular scenery dominated by rugged mountains with wooded valleys scattered like gems on their barren slopes; green in summer, gold in autumn, pink and white with the Arghawan and the tulip, the cherry, the almond, the apricot and the pear in spring. To visit the city alone is to miss much of the valley's charm. Luckily there are several one day excursions from Kabul which will introduce you to this land of the Hindu Kush.

### **A. PAGHMAN-KARGHA LAKE**

*One and a half hour tour, minimum.*

*Kabul-Paghman: 20 km; 10 mil; 20 min.*

**Petrol:** Koti Sangi (Tour III, [28]);

On road to Kargha Lake which begins at the Polytechnic Institute (Tour III, [25]).

**Refreshments:** Paghman: Bahar Cafe, Bahar Hotel gardens, *kabab*.



**Kargha:** Spoojmay Restaurant, full course Afghan and western meals, tea and cakes, etc.

**Accommodation:** Paghman: Bahar Hotel

Kargha: Camping; villas for rent-near restaurant.

[1] The Emperor Babur described Paghman as “one of the most desirable places in Kabul” in the 16th century and it is still regarded as such. Each Friday during the summer scores of the holiday-minded from the city pour into this village to picnic in its numerous gardens. The more affluent retire to the seclusion of small villas they have built in ever-increasing numbers during the past few years. During the week, however, all is quiet; an idyllic change from shopping and sightseeing. Paghman is thickly blanketed with snow during the winter and very beautiful, but little is open.

[2] There are two roads to Paghman, both paved. One begins at Koti Sangi and is described below in paragraphs 3-4; the other which passes by Kargha Lake is discussed in paragraphs 16-18. This discussion takes you



up to Paghman from Koti Sangi and returns via Kargha.

[3] Half way between Koti Sangi and Paghman you pass through the village of Khwaja Mosafer, the Place of the Holy Pilgrim, named for a pilgrim who settled here and gained a reputation for great holiness. Near his shrine there is another called the Ziarat-i-Shah-o-Aros, the shrine of the Bride and Groom. According to legend a young couple was celebrating their wedding in the gardens around the holy man's tomb when word reached them of an approaching enemy. The bride prayed that she and her loved one might die before the enemy captured them whereupon they were both instantly turned to stone. You may see numerous pennants flying above these shrines, on your right.

[4] Soon after leaving Khwaja Mosafer one notes a distinct change in the atmosphere, a cool crispness in the air, the absence of dust, which reminds one that Paghman is 2200 meters ( 7717 ft. ) above sea level, 403 meters (1817 ft.) above Kabul. Entering the village of **Paghman** one arrives at the Central Square. *Left over bridge just below this square and left again, downhill to: King Amanullah's race course, and the village of Beg Tut where Amir Habibullah (r. 1901-1919) had a summer palace which was used as a T.B. Sanitorium during King Amanullah's reign. A Victory Arch built by King Amanullah as a memorial to the great achievement accomplished by those who fought and died in the War of Independence in 1919, stands in the middle of the Central Square.*

A symbol of Afghanistan's resurrection, the arch was built after the King and Queen returned from a seven month tour of Europe, Egypt, Turkey, Russia and Persia.

[5] Continue up the hill to a second square where you will find a **monument** commemorating the birth of King Amanullah (r. 1919-1929) in Paghman. King Amanullah made this hillside village his summer capital and many public buildings and palaces were built here under his auspices. The nobility followed his example and built elaborate villas in the middle of large, well-kept gardens which were open to public view for a royal decree forbade any walls. You will note several of these villas along this route though some are hidden now by recently built walls. Others are in crumbling disrepair for Paghman became distinctly unfashionable after King Amanullah was forced into exile in 1929. Paghman became the symbol of his unpopular modernization schemes, lavish spending and western orientation and the new regime hesitated from any association with it. The natural beauty and the pleasant climate could not be denied, however, and Paghman began to regain its popularity very gradually about eight years ago.

[6] One of the largest public buildings built by King Amanullah was the Paghman Hotel, recently reopened as the **Bahar Hotel**, just below the upper square. You may rest on benches under magnificent old trees standing in the garden of the hotel and enjoy a few skewers of *kabab* with tea and *nan* if you wish. Or you may

prefer the open-air teachouse on the square.

[7] The road forks at this square. Take right fork. *Road to left beside the river leads to the elaborate little theater which was set on fire in 1929 during the Bacha Saqao rebellion against King Amanullah.* Taking the right fork you will note a large red building on the left which is a **mosque** built in the characteristic style of the Amanullah period. It stands on the lower most edge of **Bagh-i-Umumi** (Public Garden) which was laid out under the king's enthusiastic supervision. On the center terrace there is a two-storied cafe, several fountains, and a bandstand where the band used to play every afternoon during the busy social season.

[8] Below the cafe, on the terrace just above the mosque, there is a **natural amphitheatre**, its seats now covered with grass. Parliament sat here in August, 1928. In the parking lot above the amphitheatre you may still see a large stone roller which was pulled by elephants in leveling and preparing these gardens. Elephants were to be found in considerable numbers in Kabul up to the time of the Bacha Saqao rebellion. They were used for hauling and on ceremonial occasions when they were gaily bedecked with gilt trappings. They are also credited with having saved Kabul during a great fire in 1908 by speedily demolishing all the houses in the vicinity.

[9] Many lovely villas on spacious estates, including that of His Majesty's uncle, H.R.H. Marshal



Shah Wali Khan Ghazi, Victor of Kabul, line the road beyond the Bagh-i-Umumi. Sardar Shah Wali was the first to lead his *lashkar* (tribal levies) into Kabul against Bacha Saqao on the 10th of October, 1929 for which he received the title of Victor of Kabul. The graded road ends just beyond his estate, at the entrance to His Majesty King Zahir Shah's Paghman Palace, hidden from view behind high walls to the right at the top of the hill. Here the road deteriorates but if you have a sturdy car you may continue for another kilometer or so (about 10 min.) to Darra (The Valley), passing two fine villas of the Amanullah period on the way. The first, standing beside the walls of His Majesty's estate, was the home of King Amanullah's mother. The second very elaborate building standing in a grove of mulberry trees unfettered by any walls, was the home of the King's brother, King Inayatullah who ruled for three days after King Amanullah left Kabul in mid-January, 1929.

[10] A small square building with a pillared veranda sits on a lower terrace across from these villas. Here Amir Habibullah (r. 1901-1919), the father of King Amanullah, finally met with members of a Turco-German Mission come to persuade him to align Afghanistan with the Central Powers and break relations with Britain. The Mission arrived in Kabul on the 26th of September, 1915, but they were kept in almost total isolation in their quarters in the haremserai at Babur's Gardens until October when the Amir finally consented to a meeting

in Paghman. He had already declared the neutrality of Afghanistan and he continued to abide by his word through artful diplomacy until the Mission left in May, 1916, empty handed. This took considerable courage for the tribesmen called the Amir a *kafir* (infidel) for not joining in a *jihad* (holy war) with the Ottoman Empire against the infidel British. Furthermore, a powerful “war party” was present at his court consisting of such eminent personalities as: Nasrullah, the Amir’s brother; the Amir’s two sons, Inayatullah (afterwards King Inayatullah, 1929) and Amanullah (afterwards King Amanullah, 1919-1929); General Nadir Khan (afterwards King Mohammad Nadir Khan, 1929-1933); and his illustrious adviser-diplomat, Mahmud Beg Tarzi, father of Amanullah’s wife (afterwards Queen Souriya).

[11] Turning from the machinations of history to the beauty of nature, the road bends to the right leaving all these buildings behind and heads for the mountains. Willows nod by the river on the left, farmers plow their fields, and a village perches picturesquely on the mountainside to the right. On any Friday during the summer you need not look for the entrance to Darra (The Valley) for cars, taxis, lorries and buses line the road these days, a new phenomena which speaks of Kabul’s growing affluence-and of a tremendous increase in vehicles over the past few years. A word of caution: to avoid the traffic jams which frequently occur on the bad portion of the road, leave Darra an hour or more before dusk,

around 4 p.m. at the latest. On any other day except Friday, watch for a small building on the left with a clearing or "parking lot" in front, and pull in here. You need not worry about going too far out of your way, however, for the road, such as it is even, ends abruptly just beyond.

[12] The gardens of Darra have been left in a natural state for the most part, except for an occasional grassy plot bordered with flowers. The huge old trees beckon picnickers and on Friday you will find whole families enjoying the fresh air and beautiful surroundings. Aghans love to spend time with nature; their literature is full of references to the joys of such relaxing outings. They come well prepared and spread out rugs, thin mattresses and pillows under the trees and settle in comfortably. Pressure cookers soon begin to hiss and delicious odours rise, while villagers pass around with baskets filled high with the fruits for which Paghman has long been famous. Many cherry trees grow in the vicinity and in July the trees bend low with this luscious fruit introduced to Kabul from Ferghana in Central Asia by the Emperor Babur in the 16th century.

[13] A teahouse serves tea to those who come without stoves and cooking pots; candy sellers do a brisk business; others call out to children and adults alike, urging them to try their luck in a game of chance. Some try their hand at bursting balloons with a rifle, others try



to ring coins with hoops so light it takes a deft wrist to win. The most ancient game is probably *tokhm jangi* or egg fighting. The player selects a number of eggs dyed bright red and piled high in a basket, lines them up and bets he can crack the tops of most of them. Holding an egg cupped in one hand with just the top showing, he holds it out for his opponent to tap with another egg. If the opponent's egg cracks first, he holds another one for the player to tap, and so on until the line is finished. The one who cracks the most eggs is the winner. Skill is needed to know just how to hold the egg and just how hard to tap; luck is needed to select an egg with the hardest shell. All in all a happy, carefree atmosphere pervades this garden on Fridays, echoed by the burbling icy-clear stream flowing through its center.

[14] There is another large garden called the **Tapa** or **King's Garden** below the central square with the Victory Arch. Facing downhill, toward Kabul with your back toward the Arch, take the road on the left, away from the river. Half a mile beyond the square turn right on lower of two roads.

[15] Compared to Darra, the Tapa gardens are formal. Stately trees shadow well-kept terraced lawns and flower beds beside large fountains; arcades grace the lower terrace from which one may look down upon the Kargha Lake and Kabul spread out at the foot of the Sulaiman Mountains which recede into the

distance, range upon range. On the opposite side from the car park, steps lead down to a large swimming pool on the terrace in front of another palace belonging to His Majesty. The gardens continue from here in a more natural state, dotted here and there with artificial lakes and ponds. His Majesty has opened these gardens to the public and you may also picnic here.

[16] Return to the main road where you turned off to visit the Tapa. Turn right, and continue downhill toward Kabul past thick stands of poplars and the Forest Nursery, through a picturesque country landscape of wheat and clover fields edged with poplars, villages and *qala* (typical walled village residences). The road curves around the end of Kargha Lake, pierces a miniature pass and descends steeply. Take first left after the pass, a very sharp left, to visit the **Spoojmay (Moonlight) Restaurant** on the shores of the lake. Swimming facilities are provided and there are motor boats for hire. A trout fishing license may also be obtained. Additional sports facilities are planned for the future. The mountains encircling the lake take on a special aura toward sunset, turning into looming guardian silhouettes against the fading sky. If you stay until dawn, the effect is even more entrancing as the huge silhouettes slowly appear out of the complete darkness.

[17] As you return to the road to Kabul you will note thousands of little evergreens on the barren hillsides, planted during the term of Mohammad Daoud

Khan, cousin of His Majesty, who served Afghanistan as Prime Minister from 1953-1963. Kargha and the forestation of the hills around it was one of his most cherished projects. The new Golf Club is located at the end of the dam just above the new **Golf Course** which spreads over the hollow at the foot of the dam. The trout hatchery established by the People's Republic of Bulgaria is also located here.

[18] Beyond the Golf Course there is a military garrison hidden in the trees on the left but the country landscape predominates until one passes the petrol station on the right and a military housing development and the Polytechnic Institute **Tour III**, [25] on the left. The peaceful villages and fields on the right are soon to disappear, according to the city development plans which allot 35 square kilometers in this area to the Khushal Khan Mina residential section **Tour III**, [27].

## **B. ISTALIF AND THE KOH DAMAN**

*Half day tour; full day if combined with Salang (C).*

*To Istalif : 55 km; 34 mi, 1 hr. 13 km; 8.5 unpaved.*

**Accommodations:** Hotel Istalif

**Refreshments:** Hotel Istalif, order in advance only.

*Kabab* and teahouses in village

**Petrol :** Foot of Khair Khana Pass, 3 miles from edge of town.

[1] The road to Istalif begins at the foot of Bagh-i-Bala, **Tour III**, [16] and runs past the Khair Khana



Housing Project, a joint Afghan-United Nations project, and through the **Khair Khana Pass** (Pass of Goodness) so named by Amir Habibullah (r. 1901-1919) who changed its name from Khers Khana or the Bear's Pass.

[2] On a spur to the right, just before the pass and just behind the petrol station, **DAFA** (Delegation Archæologique Francaise en Afghanistan) excavated a Brahmanic temple dating from the 5th century A.D. when the Hindu Shahi ruled Kabul. The major find was a beautifully sculptured marble piece depicting the Sun God Suriya riding in a chariot drawn by two horses guided by the charioteer Dawn seated between them. This piece is now on view in the Bamiyan Room at the Kabul Museum. Every year on Naoroz (New Year's Day, March 21) the Kabul Municipality stages a large fair here. Prizes for the best horses, cows, donkeys, sheep and goats are awarded at this time and several entertainments such as ram fights, wrestling and a traditional sword and shield combat are performed.

[3] From the Khair Khana Pass one descends into the lovely **Koh Daman** (Skirts of the Hills) Valley, one of the richest and most beautiful valleys in the country. It is noted particularly for its vineyards, but almond, pear, apricot, fig and cherry trees flourish here also, as do mulberries, an important ingredient in the village diet.

[4] The following may be noted enroute to Istalif:

**Marker 17: Turnoff to His Majesty's Experimental Farm at Karizamir.** The greenhouses and cattle barns may be visited.

**Marker 21/22: Village of Qala Murad Beg** with many shops offering a riotous selection of pottery from Istalif and Jalalabad plus handsome utilitarian pottery made in the village itself.

**Marker 30/31: Turnoff to excavations of the Japanese Archaeological Mission at Tapa Iskander (Alexander's Mound).** The excavation of this very large Kushan site began in 1970. Those with a keen eye will be able to make out a Buddhist stupa belonging to this complex, on the hillside far to the right. The road to the excavations drops down from a bridge into the river and winds its way between high village walls. It is passable for small cars with high clearance and for jeeps and Land Rovers but it is difficult.

**Marker 32: Village of Serai Khodja,** recently officially renamed **Mir Bacha Kot**, a large administrative and commercial center.

**Marker 41/42: Turnoff onto dirt road to Istalif,** on the left.

[5] Istalif is one of the oldest mountainside villages in the Koh Daman, and probably one of the more picturesque. Some say it was named by the soldiers of Alexander the Great's army who camped here in the 4th century B.C. and that the name Istalif is derived from the Greek word for

grape. The Emperor Babur tells of how he acquired gardens here early in the 16th century and comments: "Few quarters possess a district that can rival Istalif." The road across the valley climbs into the hills and enters Istalif at the Takht or Throne where, as Babur says, "large spreading plane trees spread their shade, making pleasant sitting places beneath." Many come to picnic here. The Hotel Istalif is also located on the Takht.

[6] The village itself is best viewed from the Takht and those who wish to picnic or stroll in a wilder, more natural, setting, will enjoy the Bagh-i-Kalan (Great Garden) which spreads across the hillside on the other side of the Takht from the village.

[7] Most historical references to Istalif emphasize its beauty and peacefulness, describing it much as it is today. After the disastrous retreat of British forces from Kabul in January, 1842, however, an avenging army under General Pollock returned in September to find that many of the leaders of the revolt had left Kabul for Istalif. The British followed to burn and raze the village to the ground until "not a house was left standing." The British left, the villagers returned, and Istalif rose again.

[8] You may drive or walk down to the river and up into the village on the other side. The village is famous for its blue pottery, but in recent years brown, green, and yellow glazes have been introduced. Rustic carved



wooden chests are another specialty as are the small cotton prayer rugs. There are numerous antique shops as well, many of which sell village folkart from the area. If you wish to see the artisans at work, ask any shopkeeper to guide you.

### C. SALANG PASS AND KHINJAN

**Salang:** *half day tour; 122 km; 76 mi; 2 hrs. to tunnel. Full day if combined with Istalif ( B).*

**Khinjan:** *full day tour; 162 km; 100 mi; 3 hrs. Hotel*

**Tolls:** round trip to Salang, 90 afs.  
to Khinjan, 140 afs.

**Petrol:** enroute at Charikar and Khinjan

**Refreshments:** teahouses and *kabab* at Charikar and enroute as noted;

Khinjan Hotel-telephone in advance.

[1] The Salang Pass lies in the heart of the Hindu Kush mountains. Through it one passes from the Kabul and Koh Daman valleys into the northern foothills which lead onto the Turkestan Plains. This trip presents some of the world's most thrilling and spectacular scenery.

[2] For items of interest during the first 41 km; 25.5 mi. of this tour see above under section B. ISTALIF. passing the turnoff to Istalif note at:

**Marker 44/45: Town of Qara Bagh (Black Garden),** a large provincial center with stalls piled high with fruits in season by the roadside. Qara Bagh is in the center of this grape producing area and in its vicinity you will notice many houses with slotted walls. These are actually raisin houses. The slotted walls allow air to circulate around bunches of grapes draped over long poles turning the grapes into white raisins. Red raisins are produced by drying the grapes in the sun.

[3] **Marker 48/49. Toll gate: 20 afs; keep ticket and surrender it at next toll gate at Jabal Seraj.** At this toll gate note a low hill far to the right which has a broad white stripe down its side. This is the **Reg Rawan** or Moving Sands, celebrated in legend. It is said that the Imam Hannifa Ghazni has lived inside this hill for the past one thousand years and that one day he will emerge to bring peace to the world. The Imam sits on a golden throne encrusted with jewels and he presides over an opulent court, guarded by finely dressed courtiers on high-stepping horses jingling with dazzling caparisons. Drums beat and cymbles ring when he mounts his throne and rumbling echoes of the chorus may at times be heard by those passing by. The site of the ancient Kushan capital of Kapisa (Begram) is located in this area, just in front of the Reg Rawan at the confluence of the Ghorband and Panjsher Rivers (see D. Gulbahar-Kapisa for discussion).

[4] **Marker 46: Buddhist stupa of Tope Darra may**

be seen to the left, standing at the top of a draw above a clump of trees. Part of a monastery complex, it dates from the Kushan period during the early centuries A.D. There are many Buddhist sites scattered throughout the Koh Daman and along the old caravan highway from India to Central Asia for Buddhism was carried from its homeland in India to the Far East along this route through Afghanistan. Many of the local princes of that time became Buddhists and thousands of pilgrims from Central Asia and China passed through on their way to visit the holy sites of the Buddha. (See below F. Guldara, Bamiyan Guide, and Guide to Afghanistan for more detailed discussion.)

[5] Marker 64, 1 hour from Kabul: **Charikar**, capital of Parwan Province is a large town noted for the manufacture of knives and scissors. Many silver shops. A sign at the entrance to the first road on the left after entering the town directs one to **Gulghundai** (Flower Hill) where the Arghawan Festival is held each year in mid-April when the Arghawan (Judas Tree) blooms. Thousands come from Kabul to picnic and enjoy the glorious blossoms which seem to impart a purply-red glow to the entire hillside. No special ceremonies.

[6] Leaving Charikar one passes by the Parwan Irrigation Project, a joint Afghanistan-People's Republic of China project. A new bridge crosses the Ghorband river just beyond. A new connecting road with the road to Bamiyan cuts to the left at the end of the bridge so



as to by-pass the construction of a large canal for the irrigation project.

[7] Marker 77: The little town of **Jabal Seraj** is built around Afghanistan's first hydro-electric station which was installed during the reign of Amir Habibullah (1. 1901-1919) by the American engineer, A. C. Jewett. There is also a large textile mill and a cement plant at Jabal Seraj. *Sharp right to Gulbahar, below D.* Toll: surrender ticket.

[8] The road enters the mountains at Jabal Seraj and climbs by the side of the Salang River past numerous villages clinging to the mountainside, set off from the craggy cliffs by groves of mulberries or an occasional cherry, apricot or almond tree growing in their vicinity. Here and there the river has been dammed by the villagers to form quiet pools attractively bordered with willows where rustic duck decoys float during the spring and fall hunting seasons. Ordinary, unsculptured, pieces of wood into which crooked branches are fitted to simulate the neck and head, these decoys are most realistic and very deceiving.

[9] Marker 99: Toll: 50 afs. If you are only going as far as the tunnel, keep this ticket handy and surrender it in lieu of payment at this same toll gate on your way back.

[10] Marker 118, 1 hour from Jabal Seraj: Entrance to final gallery leading into the **Salang Tunnel**. Altitude: 3363m; 11,100 ft; length 2675 m; 8775 ft or 2.7 km;

1.7 mi. An additional 4972 m; 16, 313 ft. of galleries have been constructed to keep the approaches free of snow. The tunnel was built by the Institute of Techno Export (USSR) and the Afghan Ministry of Public Works and opened in November, 1964. Work began in August, 1958.

[11] The road descends very rapidly after the tunnel and the scenery is subtly different for here the rugged slopes are sprinkled with Asian conifers and no villages appear until one nears the bottom of the slope where the Khinjan River flows with gathering force past numerous mulberry groves. There are several teahouses along this route which serve simple meals as well as tea such as: *korma*, *pilao*, *kabab*, *nan*, etc.

[12] Marker 159: Toll: surrender ticket.

[13] Marker 162, 1 hour from Salang Tunnel: **Khinjan** is a tiny bazaar with a petrol pump and a large hotel which was originally built for the use of technicians paving the road and building the tunnel. Swimming pool. Excellent trout fishing in Khinjan River and in the upper reaches of the Anderab River which passes by Khinjan. Best seasons: June and late September-early October. Arrangements may be made through the Afghan Tourist Organization, Kabul.

## D. GULBAHAR AND KAPISA

*One day tour with picnic lunch.*

**Kabul-Gulbahar** 88 km; 55 m; 1 hr. 20 min.

Paved road to Jabal Seraj: 77 km; 48 mi; 1 hr.

**Gulbahar-Panjsher River:** 19 km; 12 mi; 35 min.

Unpaved. Ferry across river with short walk to Kapisa.

**Petrol:** Charikar; Gulbahar Textile Company

**Refreshments:** Charikar: teahouses, *kabab* etc.

Gulbahar: Textile Casino - telephone in advance, teahouses. *kabab*, fried fish, etc.

Village teahouses as noted.

[1] This tour is primarily a pleasant leisurely ride through the countryside, recommended for those who would like to get off the main roads and see something of village life in Afghanistan.

[2] For items of interest between Kabul and Jabal Seraj see above under sections B. ISTALIF AND THE KOH DAMAN and C. SALANG PASS AND KHINJAN, paragraphs 1-7.

[3] A road sign at Jabal Seraj directs you to take a sharp right. Then take a sharp left over a small canal and veer right. Though the road is unpaved, it is fairly well graded and not difficult. Continue straight ahead to the outskirts of Gulbahar where you will come to a dead end. Turn left.

[4] From here the road gradually descends toward



the Panjsher River, passing by village houses, gardens and mulberry groves picturesquely ringed with low stone walls. Soon a large expanse of lush green appears below you on the right. This is the **Bagh-i-Umumi** or Public Garden situated beside the Panjsher River which rushes by with a hurried cool force, brushing at the grassy banks lined with avenues of immense plane trees spreading their shade over carefully tended picnic grounds. Afghanistan is liberally sprinkled with such large, naturally beautiful, relaxing public gardens for picnicing is a favorite pastime. Fishing enthusiasts have reported good luck in these waters.

[5] The center of the village of **Gulbahar** is about a kilometer beyond the park. Here you will find a typical bazaar with tiny shops filled with a fascinating array of edibles and sundries. You will be most welcome if you care to walk through the bazaar inspecting the wares. A Gulbahar specialty: large numbers of teahouses advertising fried fish for sale. The fish, usually a bony but tasty variety called *shir mahi* (milk fish), are caught fresh each day in the rivers and tributaries converging on Gulbahar from the Hindu Kush mountains by a special group called *Sayad* whom we shall meet later on the banks of the Panjsher River.

[6] A road sign in the center of town pinpoints this bazaar as an important crossroads where the road from the northern part of the province and from the south meet to swing out onto the main highway leading to the

markets of Kabul and over the Hindu Kush to the northern provinces. Roka, chief bazaar town in the beautiful Panjsher Valley which also has many lovely picnic spots, lies 33 km; 20 mi. to the north (left). One hopes that the projected road through the Panjsher Valley over the Anjuman Pass into Badakhshan will materialize in the very near future. It will be, without doubt, one of the most scenic routes in Afghanistan. Mahmoud Ragi, capital of Kapisa Province which you have just entered, lies only 15 km; 10 mi. to the south. Neither of these roads is paved. To follow this tour, turn right.

[7] Taking the right turn, one comes to a fine iron **suspension bridge** which was built during the reign of Amir Habibullah (r. 1901-1919). He was very interested in such bridges and also built one over the Kabul River at Darunta near Jalalabad but the Darunta bridge gave way to a most stolid rock and concrete structure when the reservoir and tunnel were built in 1963.

[8] From the barren heights above the bridge one looks down onto the village of Gulbahar, noting the architectural patterns typical of most villages in the hills of Afghanistan. A modern layout greets the eye a kilometer or so further on. This is the **Gulbahar Textile Company**, one of the largest plants in Asia with an annual capacity of 60,000,000 meters. It was established with assistance from the Federal Republic of Germany. Those who attended the ceremonies attending the laying of the foundation stone by Prime Minister Shah Mahmud

in 1952 can hardly believe the transformation. What was then an absolute desert, rocky and without relief of tree or shrub is now a combination of lush gardens surrounding houses boasting most modern conveniences, including air conditioning, tall trees, and towering technically-modern industrial plants.

[9] If you have called ahead for a meal to be prepared, you will find the turnoff to the Casino on the left after passing the petrol station and a small bazaar. Ask anyone to guide you. The teahouse in this bazaar serves a good *chainaki*, lamb stew cooked in mended teapots embedded in hot coals.

[10] The road deteriorates a little after the textile complex on the way to the Panjsher River. Long, wide cars with no clearance should go no farther. Most cars, however, should have no difficulty—depending, that is, on the damage wrought by snow and spring rains. Proceed, but with normal caution.

[11] For the next 7 km; 2 mi. to the village of Jamal Agha one passes through a fertile landscape and much of the way is lined with *sanjit* trees (jabjub) which scent the air with almost too much sweetness in the spring. **Jamal Agha** is a typical old-style village with a bazaar. Saturday is bazaar day at Jamal Agha and it is an exciting treat to visit any small village on bazaar day. Sleepy and quiet during the rest of the week, the bazaar suddenly erupts into a riot of color and happy bustle which lasts from early morning



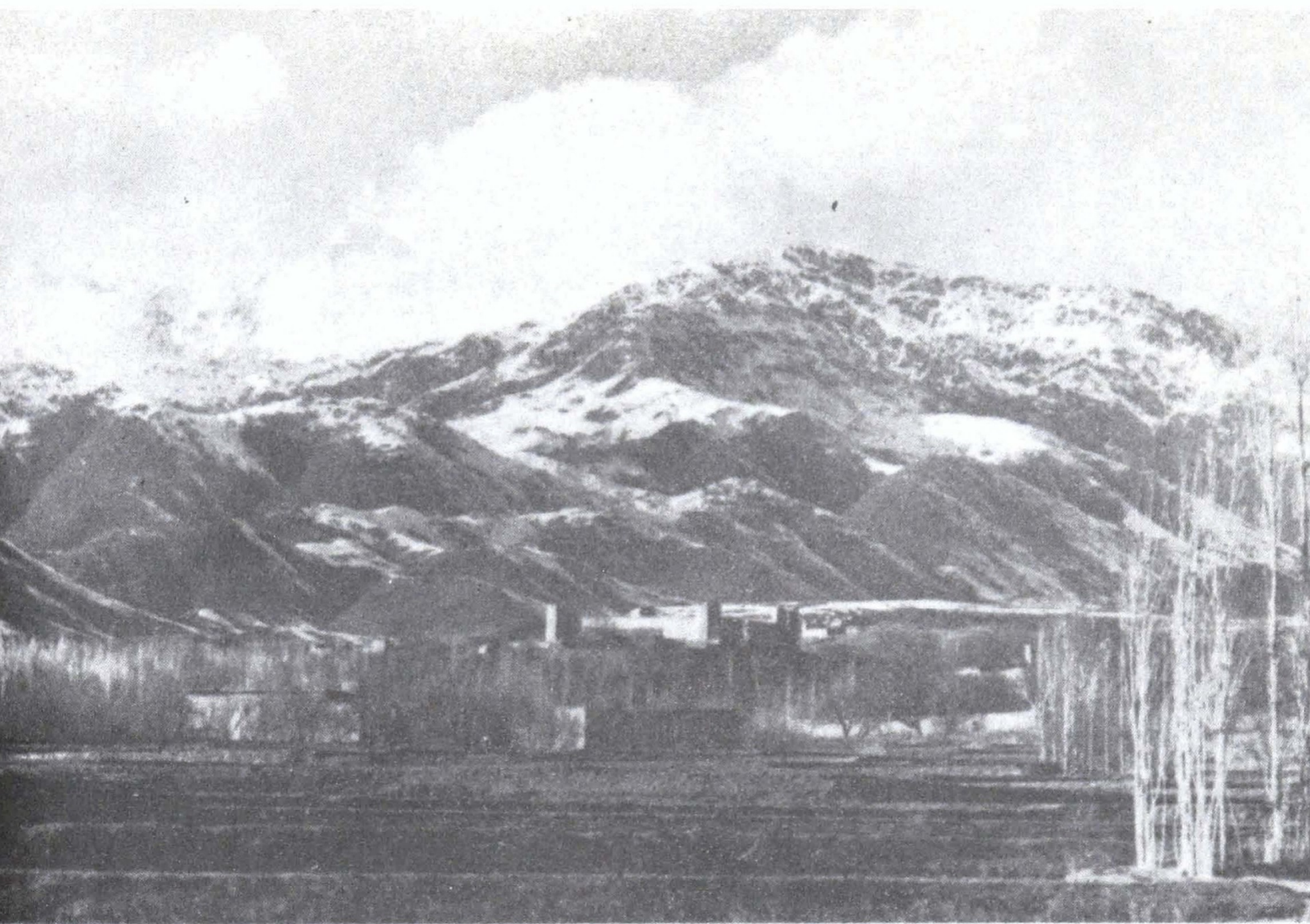
until just after noon. Itinerant craftsmen bring their wares, setting them out for display by the roadside. Barbers, shoemakers and tailors set up shop beside them and villagers from miles around come to buy and barter. On the outskirts, horses and donkeys happily chomp away at the grass beside *juis* (small irrigation canals) while they wait patiently to be homeward bound.

[12] **Deh Bali**, another typical village, lies 4 km; 2.5 mi ahead. At the end of this bazaar take a small road branching off to the right. About fifteen minutes later this becomes a pretty road winding down through groves of mulberry trees to **Bazaar-i-Sayad** (6 km; 4 mi from Deh Bali) consisting of a couple of charming little teahouses. *Sayad* are a group of specialists who net and hunt fish and migratory birds for sale in Gulbahar and Kabul. You may note a number of very large demoiselle crane standing in the fields near their homes. These are used as judas birds to lure the flocks of wild birds which fly over this valley in great numbers during the spring and fall.

[13] The **Panjsher River** lies just ahead. Tall concrete pillars rise from it, the beginnings of the unfinished Burj-i-Abdullah Bridge which was started in 1970. When and if this project is completed a good road will connect Gulbahar with Qara Bagh on the main highway, crossing the river at this point.

[14] A circular mound above the river on the opposite side with a modern construction at one corner



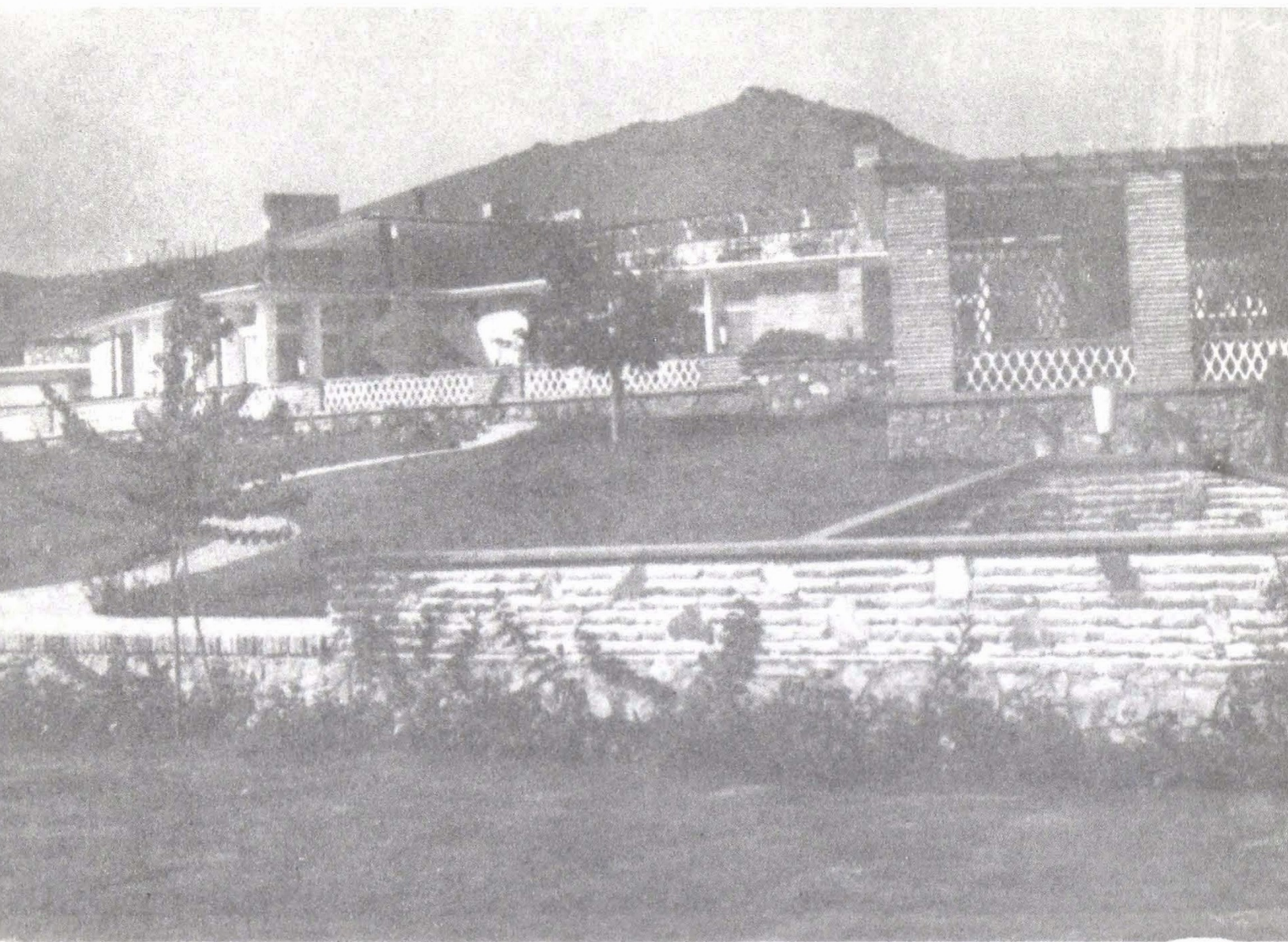


The Paghman Valley; *R. MacMakin*

Victory Arch, Paghman; *L. Dupree*

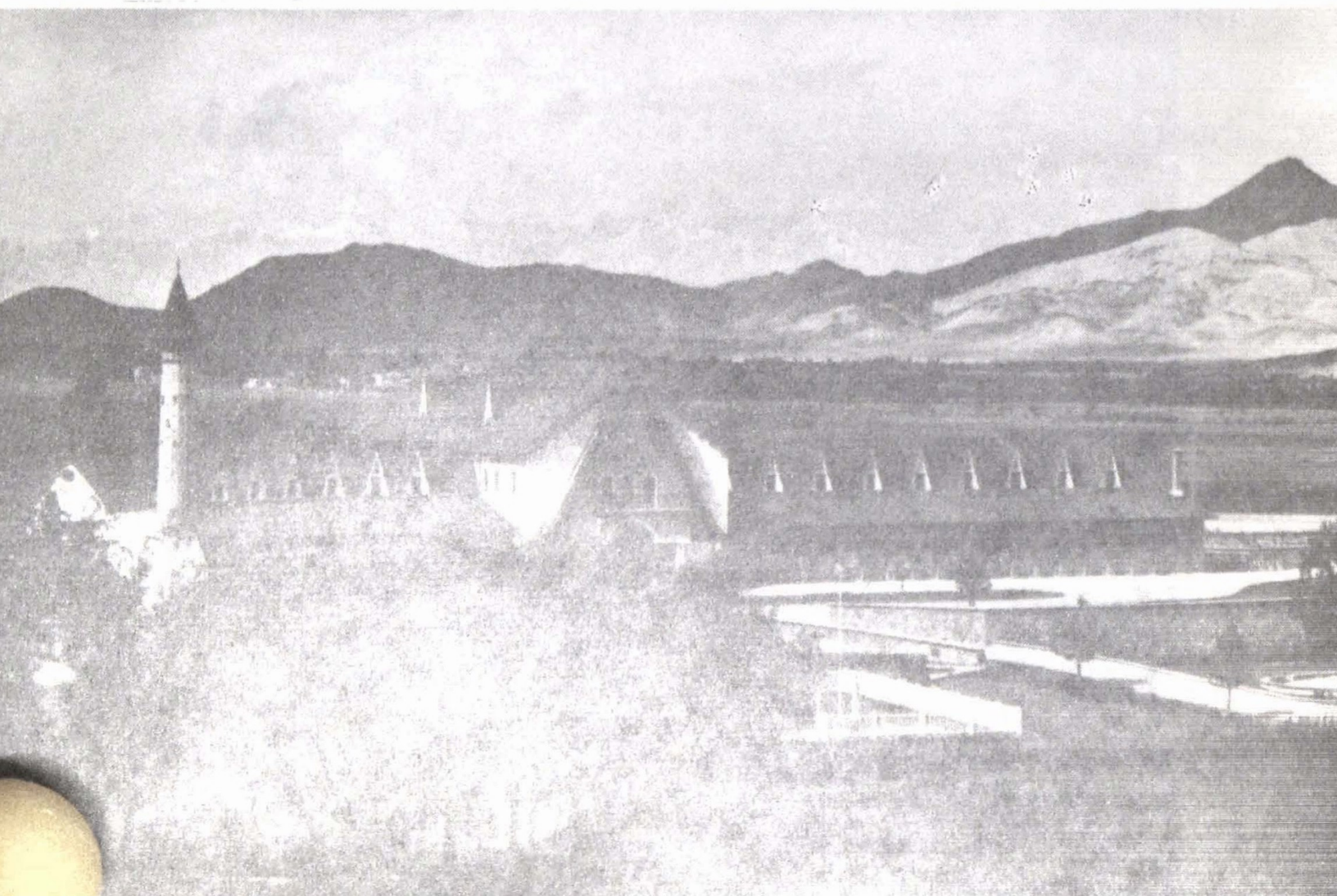






Spozmai Restaurant at Kargha Lake; *Afghan Film*

The Royal Farms at Karizamir; *Afghan Film*

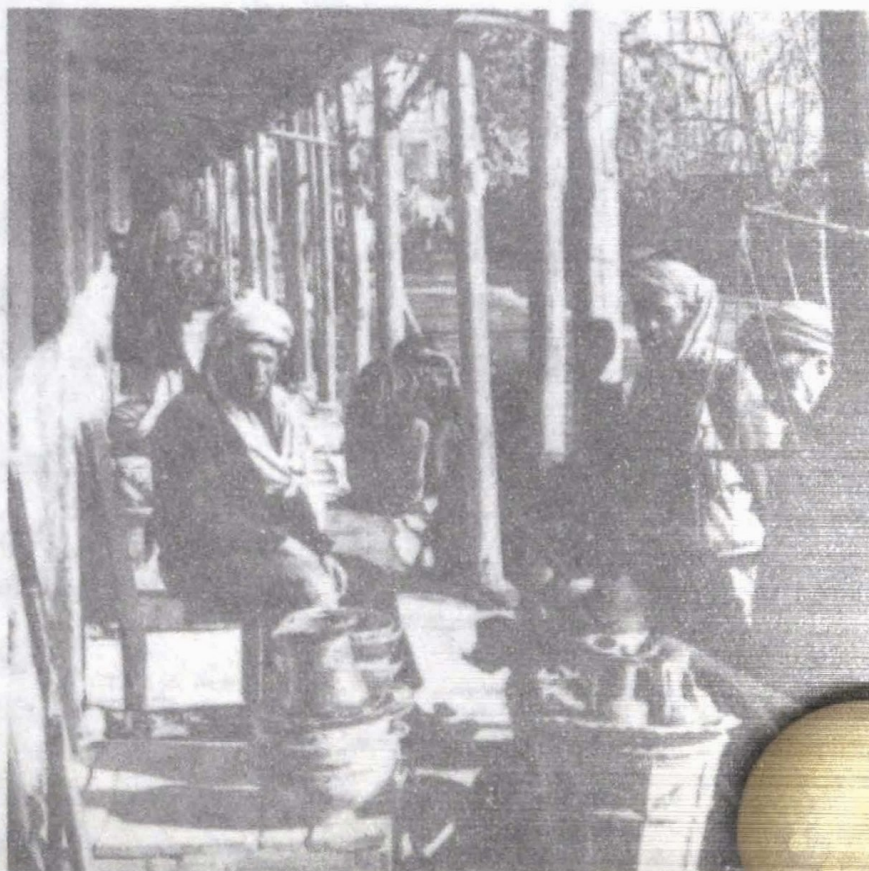




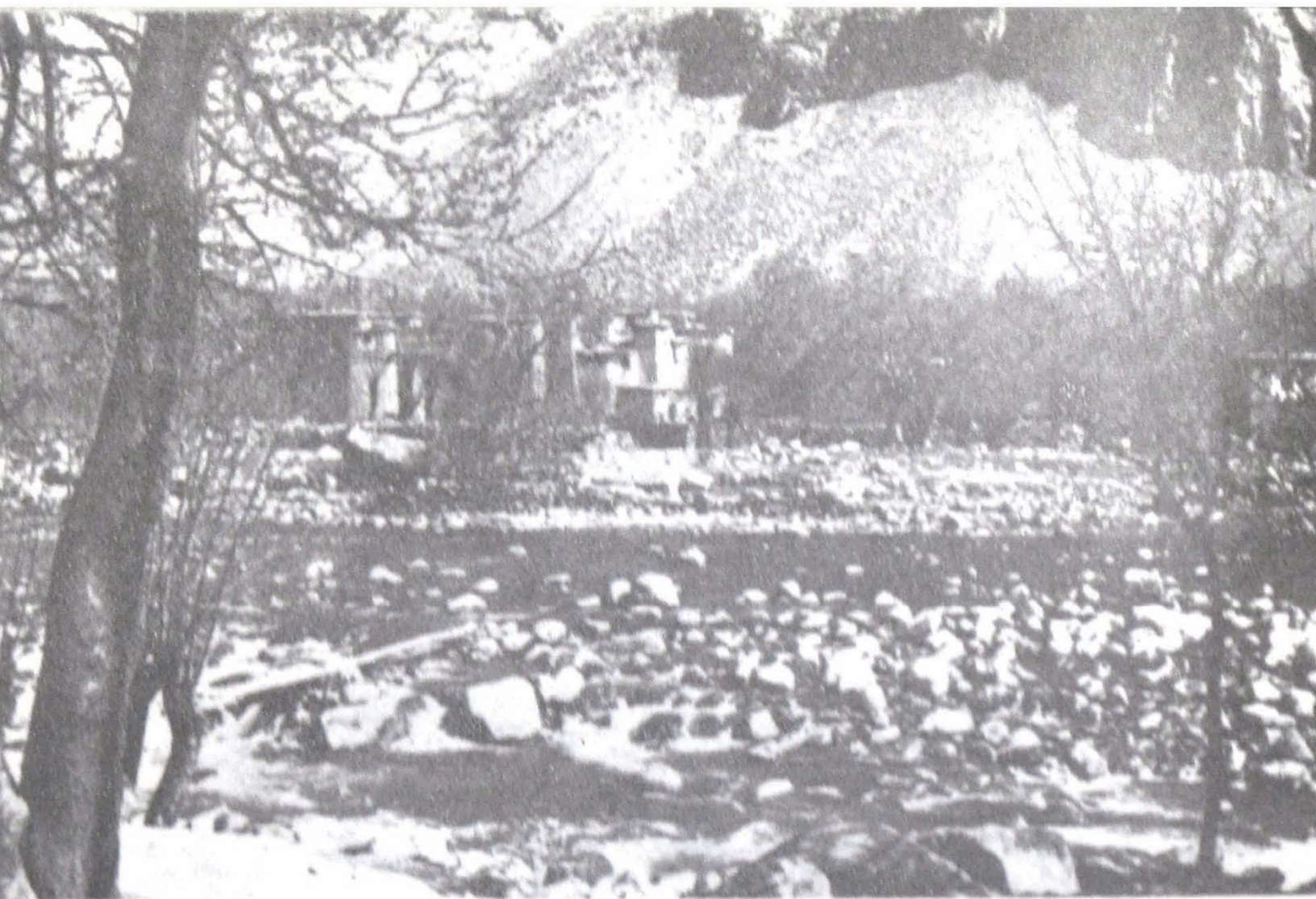


The Village of Istalif from the Takht; *L. Dupree*

Main Street, Istalif; *N.H. Dupree*

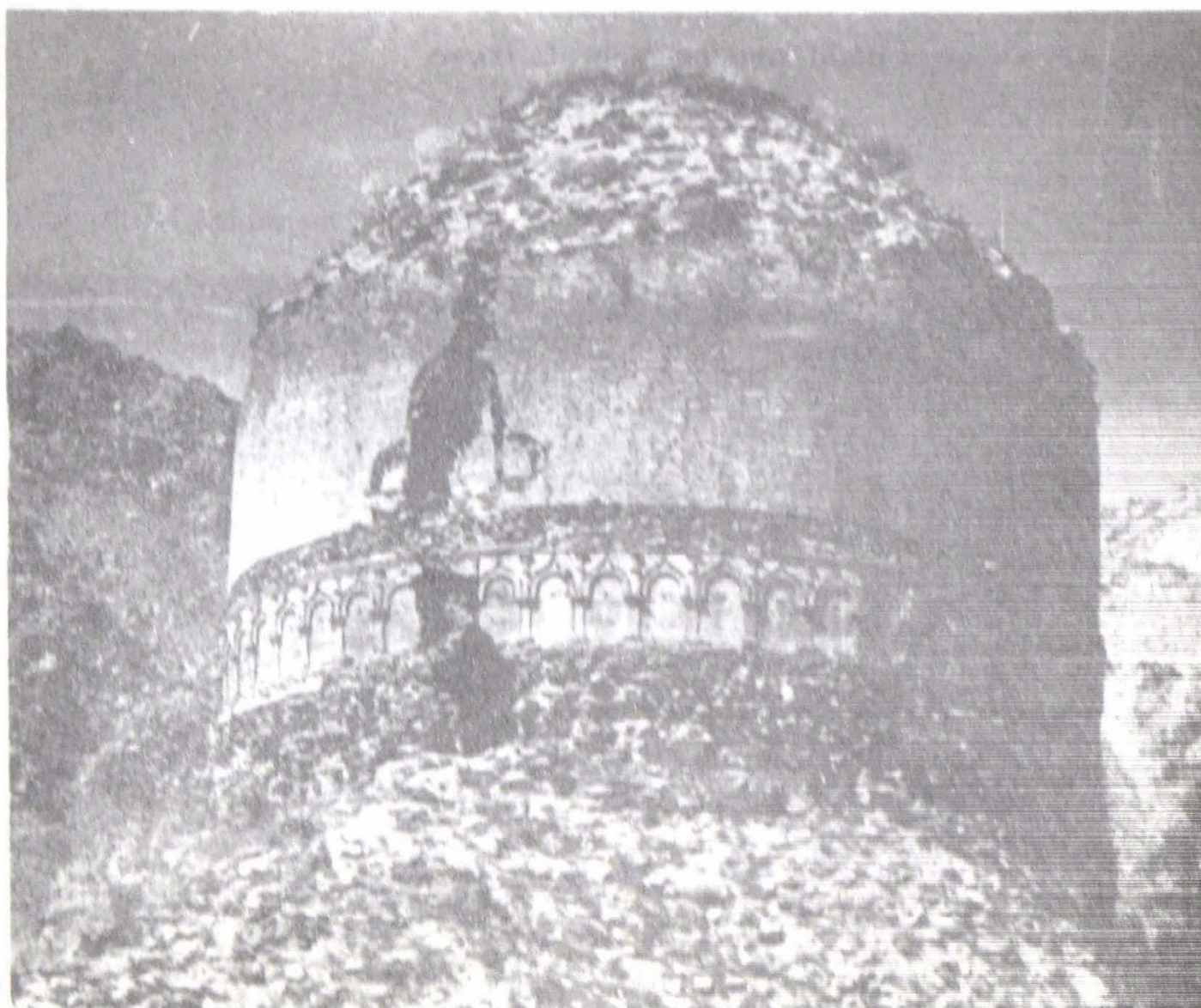




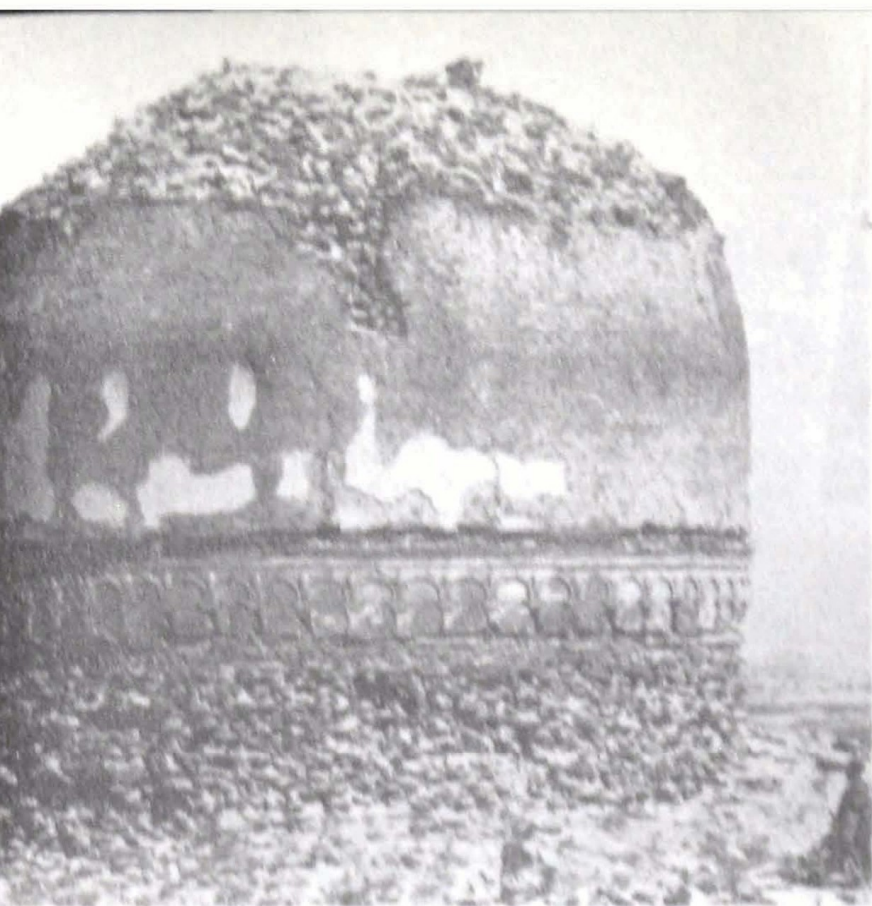


The Panjshir Valley;; *Afghan Tourist Organization*

The Stupa of Tope Darra near Charikar; *L. Dupree*







*Left; The Stupa of Shewaki; N.H. Dupree; Right; Minar-i-Chakari; DAFA*

*The Stupa of Guldara; L. Dupree*





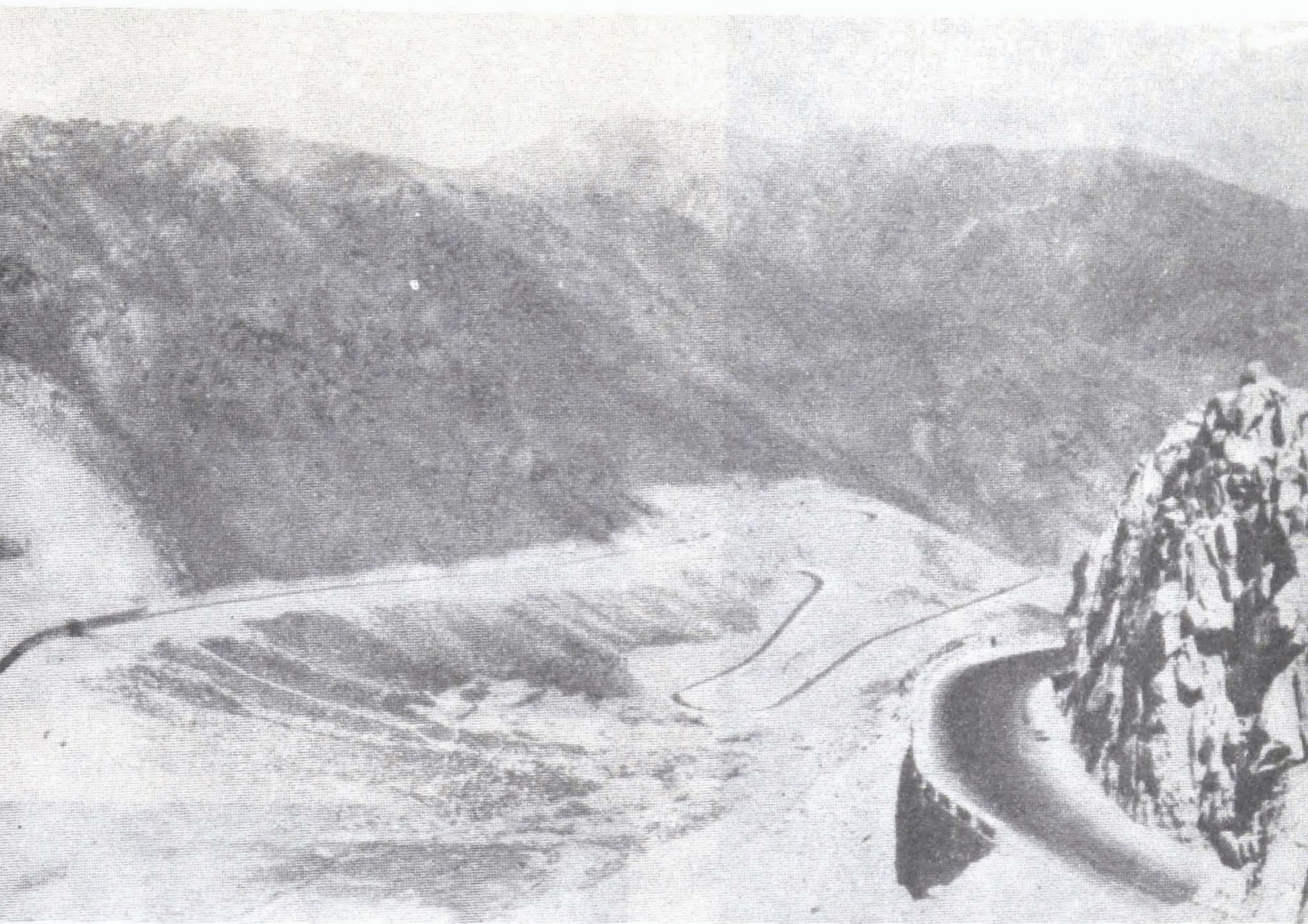


Salang Pass Construction; *Afghan Film*

Tangi Gharu, the Kabul Gorge; *Afghan Tourist Organization*







The Salang Pass; *L. Dupree*

Buzkashi in Kabul; *J. Powell*

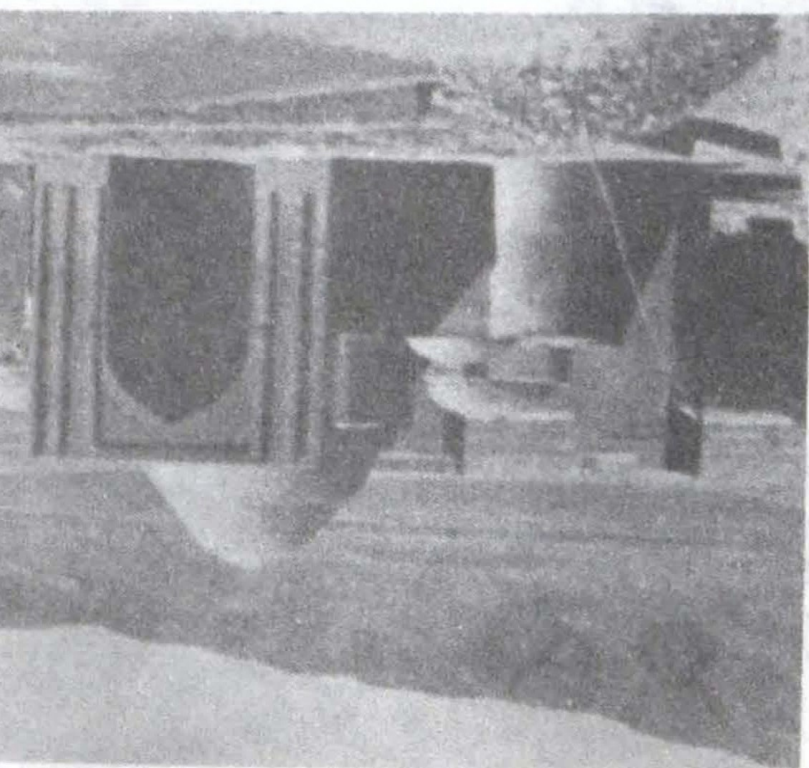
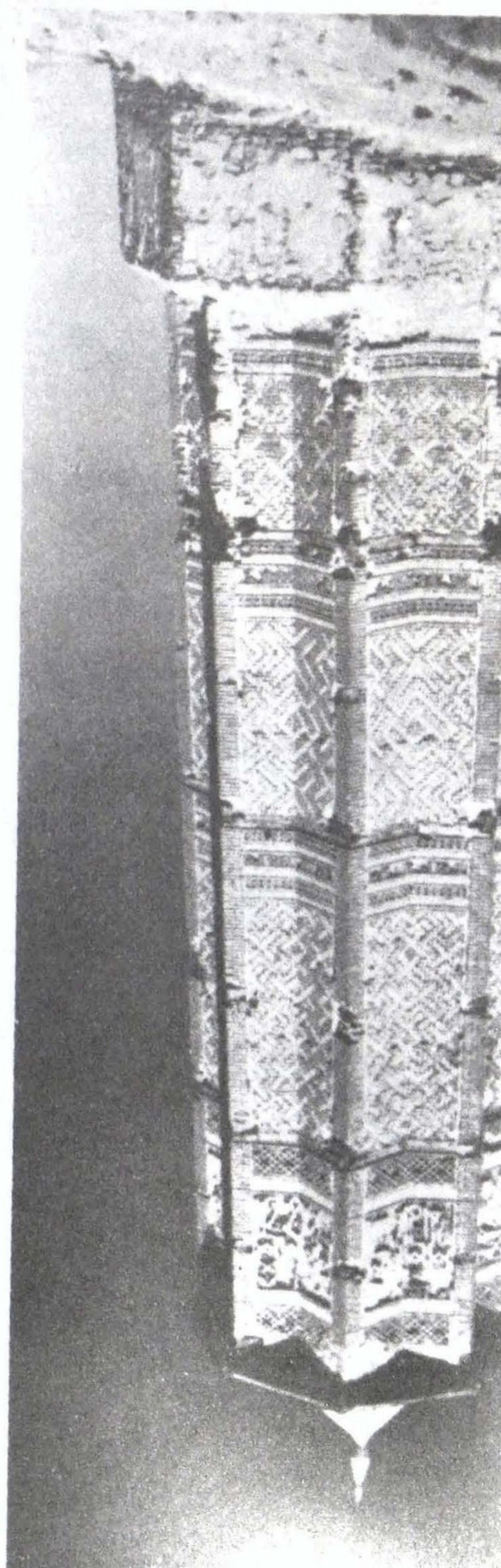




*Left: Minaret of Ghazni; H.E. Klappert*

*Top right: The Museum of Islamic Arts; H.E. Klappert*

*Lower right: Tomb of Sultan Mahmud of Ghazni; H.E. Klappert*





is the supposed site of an outpost dating from the time of Alexander the Great in the middle of the 4th century B.C. Today it is called Burj-i-Abdullah, Abdullah's Tower. Behind it and to the left a long mound marks the site of a Greco-Bactrian city of the last centuries B.C. which became the Kushan capital of **Kapisa** during the early centuries A.D. It is here, in 1939, that French archaeologists with DAFA (Delegation Archæologique Française en Afghanistan) found the twentieth century's most spectacular finds. In two small rooms, exquisitely carved ivories wrought in classic Indian style were stacked side by side with fine Chinese lacquers and an infinite variety of Roman bronzes, bas reliefs and Alexandrian glass. These are now on display in the Begram Room at the Kabul Museum, Begram being the modern name for this area. They represent the extent and richness of trade along the famous Silk Route and they speak of the affluence of the city of Kapisa when it was the summer capital of the Kushan Empire which reached down into India and up to the Gobi Desert.

[15] Kapisa was a religious center as well. Near by, to the east (*long hike, ask villagers to guide you*), two Buddhist monasteries were excavated, called Paitawa and Shotorak, dating probably from the 3rd century A.D., or later. Two reliefs in the Kabul Museum are extremely interesting for they clearly represent an indigenous art style from the Kapisa area. Shotorak was a monastery built for Chinese hostages taken by

the Kushans and it is described in some detail by Hsuen-tsung, the Chinese pilgrim who passed through in the 7th century A.D. By this time, the power of the Kushans had been broken and local princes ruled, some Buddhists, some Hindu. Hinduism finally emerged as the paramount religion and by the time the Arabs entered the area, shortly after Hsuen-tsung's visit, around 644 A.D., the unsettled political situation had caused the Hindu Shahi kings to set themselves up in Kabul where the mountains afforded more protection. The final definite transfer of government to Kabul probably took place toward the end of the 8th century or beginning of the 9th century A.D. and the sands began to cover this once brilliant city.

[16] There is practically nothing for the layman to see at the excavations except a portion of the outer defenses and two sections of pits. Those with a liking for history are encouraged to cross over the river via a handpulled ferry run by the Sayad, however. The ride in the ferry is reason enough to make the crossing. There used to be lots of ferries such as this throughout Afghanistan but each year as bridges are thrown over the rivers more and more disappear. This one, too, is in danger.

[17] From the top of the mound that once was Kapisa one can summon images from many centuries. Alexander the Great at the head of his huge army composed of foot soldiers from Greece, Egypt, and



Persia, and a dashing cavalry of superb riders from Central Asia. The execution of Governor Turriaspes by order of Alexander after he heard of the Governor's excesses in misgovernment while he camped on the banks of the River Indus, many thousands of miles away. The steady stream of caravans carrying the luxury goods of the world.

[18] And much later, the defeat of a Mongol army by the hapless Jalaluddin of Khwarizm, probably his last victorious moment before he was hounded out of the country to die in exile. This day, however, he stood firm with his troops even though a huge host seemed to face them in the half-light of dawn. Initiating the attack, he watched with wonder as the Mongols fled, only to discover that the "host" consisted primarily of straw scarecrows tied to the backs of reserve horses. On a later day, Genghis Khan himself rode across this battlefield with his youngest son Tuli beside him, pointing out the errors of the generals.

[19] But the present is no less dramatic than imagined history. The towering mountains of the Hindu Kush stand majestically across the river to the north. Exits from which many streams rush forth to water the lush expanse of Kohistan are clearly visible. The many passes which gave entrance to the caravans of the past still channel goods and peoples into this beautiful valley. The old route to India followed the Panjsher River to Sarobi; the new highway passes on the east. *The old*

*route is still passable for the adventurous. About three hours from Gulbahar to Sarobi where it joins the paved highway.*

[20] To find the rooms where the Begram treasure was found, walk west along the southern edge of the mound. On the way you will note a long trench. This was the bazaar and the series of square pits represent shops. Further along you will find another series of rooms and it was here the treasure came to light in two small rooms against a tower in the outer wall. They may have been the storeroom of some well-to-do merchant, or rooms in a wealthy household where the valuables were hastily sealed up prior to an enemy attack.

[21] The plain on the other side of the mound, away from the river, is humped with countless mounds and hillocks representing the ruins of the vast sprawling city which was Kapisa, in contrast to the large mound which was the citidel. Many thousands of coins have been recovered from here (Charles Masson reports he collected about 90,000 between 1833 and 1837!) and much surely lies hidden for future archaeologists to find. Negotiations for new excavations are, in fact, in progress.

## **E. TANGI GHARU AND THE LATABAND PASS**

**Tangi Gharu, [6]:** *One and half hour tour.*

to gorge: 32 km; 20 mi; 30 min.

**Lataband Pass [9]:** *One day tour to Sarobi and return  
by Tangi Gharu*



**Kabul-Sarobi: 72 km; 45 mi; 3 hrs.**

**Permit for Lataband must be obtained from  
Tourist Office. No firearms allowed without  
hunting license.**

**Petrol:** Lataband route: Bala Hissar (Tour II, [9])  
Sarobi

**Hotel:** Hotel Sarobi

**Refreshments:** teahouses at Sarobi

[1] In its ruggedness the Tangi Gharu is far more spectacular than anything to be seen in the Khyber Pass. It is typical, however, of many gorges to be found in the heart of the Hindu Kush. For this reason we recommend this short, easy trip to the Tangi Gharu if your visit to Afghanistan is limited to Kabul. For a more extensive sample of Afghanistan's remarkable scenery, you may enjoy an easy one day excursion combining the Lataband Pass and the Tangi Gharu. The Lataband is not much used these days, however, except by the nomads, and spring rains may damage the road considerably. It is wise, therefore, to check with the Tourist Office before making this trip. Also, because of new hunting regulations, you *must* not carry any firearms of any kind and you *must* have a permit to proceed past the barrier at Butkhak. Even with the permit some have experienced delay.

[2] The history of the changing routes from Kabul to India is interesting. After Kabul rose to prominence

over Kapisa (see above section D. GULBAHAR AND KAPISA, 14-21) during the end of the 8th or beginning of the 9th century A.D., the popular route to India via the Panjsher River lost much of its traffic to other routes starting from Kabul. By the 16th century, the Moghuls were coming and going via the Khord Kabul which swings in a long loop south from the village of Butkhak to pass through Jagdalik before reaching Jalalabad. They built post houses every five or six mile along this route for the tribal territory was very dangerous. The British Army used this route also during the First Anglo-Afghan War (1838-1842).

[3] During the Second Anglo-Afghan War (1878-1880), General Roberts elected to use a shorter route via the Lataband Pass which passed north of the Khord Kabul route, and by the time western residents in Kabul begin describing their visits to the court of Amir Abdur Rahman (r. 1880-1901), they write almost exclusively of the Lataband route and report that the Khord Kabul road had fallen into disrepair. Seeking to shorten the way still further and to avoid the snow covered pass, Amir Abdur Rahman looked to an animal trail beside the Kabul River through the Tangi Gharu Gorge. Though he spent lacs of rupees in exploring the possibilities of this route, he found the wild chasm too inhospitable for the roadbuilders of his day though a track for horses was successfully completed.

[4] Chroniclers of Amir Habibullah's time (r. 1901-



1919) first speak of two routes from Kabul meeting at Jalalabad; the track through the Tangi Gharu and the road via the Lataband Pass. Later on, however, they tell us that the Amir dispaired over the upkeep of the Lataband road which almost disappeared each year during the spring floods so once again he turned to the Khord Kabul which he made motorable. King Amanullah (r. 1919-1929) used this route also and there were fine serais all along the way with comfortable rest houses and the route was marked with milestones which also gave the altitude.

[5] His Majesty King Mohammad Zahir Shah finally turned the early dream of a route through the Tangi Gharu into a reality and it has been paved since 1960.

[6] The road to the Tangi Gharu and Jalalabad begins at the clock tower in front of Mahmud Khan Bridge Tour II, [51]. Map II.

[7] First one passes the Slaughter House and Tannery on the left. This tannery was established by Mr. Thornton from England in 1904 during the reign of Amir Habibullah (r. 1901-1919). Mr. Thornton and his wife Annie wrote an engaging account of their stay in Kabul (see bibliography). Kabul's newest industrial development area begins just beyond. Here you will find the new Custom's House, several textile and raisin processing plants, a wool mill, a winery and several other establishments before coming to the Pul-

i-Charkhi military base, home of the Military Academy since 1970. Another section of the military base follows and then the road enters the mountains by the side of the Kabul River.

[8] Once within the mountainous cavern, the road twists and turns passing, just beyond Marker 30. a small dam which diverts the waters of the Kabul River into a large tunnel on the right. This is the **Mahipar Gorge** which has given its name to this hydroelectric project opened in 1966. About 3 kilometers beyond you reach the top of the magnificent gorge. You may stop here or drive on for an additional 3 kilomoters of switchbacks to the bottom of the gorge in order to appreciate the ruggedness in its entirety.

[9] Those deciding on the **Lataband** tour begin at the **Minar-i-Nejat** at the foot of the **Bala Hissar Tour II**, [9]. **Map II**. Turn left, passing along one side of the **Chaman** which is on your left. On the right is a district of Kabul known as **Shah Shaheed**, named after the **Ziarat-i-Shah Shaheed**, one of the more important shrines in Kabul. Legend connects this site with that early commander of the Islamic armies who fell fighting with two swords. According to this story the commander's head was severed from his body at this spot but he continued to fight on, wielding his two swords, until he fell by the side of the Kabul River. Early 19th century visitors report having seen the tombstone of John Hicks near this shrine. It was dated 1666 and is our earliest

reference to a western resident in Kabul. Masson was told that Hicks had been an artillery officer much favoured by Kabul's Governor but his story remains a mystery.

[10] After passing a petrol pump at the foot of Sia Sang (Black Rock) Hill one passes through a new residential district named Sayed Nur Mohammad Shah Mina after a very distinguished Prime Minister to Amir Sher Ali Khan (r. 1863-1866; 1868-1879). Most of that unhappy period's foreign relations were conducted by him. He attended the friendly meeting at the Ambala Conference between the Amir and the British Viceroy, Lord Mayo, in March, 1869; met with Persian and British representatives on the Seistan Border Arbitration in 1872; met again with the British at the abortive Simla Conference in 1873 by which time Anglo-Afghan relations were rapidly deteriorating, only to break down completely after conferences in Peshawar in 1877 in the course of which Nur Mohammad Shah sickened and died on March 27th, 1877. The consequence of this unfortunate state of affairs was, of course, the Second Anglo-Afghan War of 1878-1880.

[11] Rising over a small pass, 5 km; 3 mi. from Kabul, one comes to the field of **Begrami**, site of another unhappy encounter with the British. It was here, on the field the British had used as their race course, that the retreating British army camped on the night of the 6th of January, 1842, the glow of their burning cantonment



Tour IV, Tour II, [13] filling the horizon behind them. The army of General Pollock camped on the same field when they returned the following September, come to avenge the disastrous retreat which took the lives of 14,000 soldiers and camp followers. More recently, this was Kabul's Golf Course until a new course was built at the foot of Kargha Dam in the late 1960s and today His Majesty celebrates his birthday on the 14th of October each year by attending the *buzkashi* championships, Afghanistan's famous national game which is played with much color and excitement.

[12] The paved road ends here, marked by one of the few remaining mile markers erected by King Amanullah (r. 1919-1929) when this was the main road to India. Continue past Pul-i-Begrami (Begrami Bridge) at which you will note one of King Amanullah's rest houses on the right, to the village of Butkhak (Clay Idol), 17 km; 10 mi; 25 min. from Kabul. Here you must present a permit in order to proceed any further.

[13] After the barrier take road to left; the right fork marks the beginning of the old Khord Kabul route. You may travel about 29 km; 18 mi; 1 1/4 hrs. along this route through the 5-mile long Khord Kabul (Little Kabul) Pass to the Band-i-Ghazi, a reservoir, but not much further. There are some nice picnic spots along the way, however.

[14] The **Lataband Pass** is 40 km; 25 mi. from Kabul. Lataband, meaning Mountain of Rags, gets its name

from a belief that wishes will be granted to those hanging bits of their clothing on the bushes of this mountain. It is also said that the Empress Nurjahan, wife of the Moghul Emperor Jehangir, was born on this peak. Before crossing over the pass the road rises high enough so that you can look back over the mountains into Kabul.

[15] On the other side the road stays high, making it possible to look down upon the spectacular view of innumerable ranges rising and falling in an uninterrupted sequence up to the foot of the lofty mountains of the Panjsher. At their foot, the valley through which the ancient Kapisa-Sarobi route makes its way can easily be detected.

[16] After the virtually deserted lands of the mountains, the fertile valley surrounding a large lake at Sarobi is a welcome sight of considerable beauty. Because of the new hydro-electric project at near-by Naglu, Sarobi is fast becoming a sizeable town with many new buildings. Turn left upon reaching the paved road to return to Kabul. (*Petrol pump at junction*).

[17] As the Kabul River enters Sarobi, it appears as a very respectable and sizeable river for just above here it has been joined by the Panjsher River which in turn has been joined by the Ghorband River at Kapisa. It is in fact the waters of three major rivers from the Hindu Kush which you see entering Sarobi. The road rises to a plateau and then drops down to the Kabul

River on the other side. Here the river is quite modest except in the spring when it churns and boils in protest against the confining mountain walls.

[18] From this point, the road bores straight into the mountains which tower higher and higher above it until it suddenly sweeps up the mountain side to reach the top of the Tangi Gharu gorge where the river drops over a waterfall. From here it gradually emerges from the mountains onto the wide Kabul plain.

## F. GULDARA AND SHEWAKI BUDDHIST STUPAS

**Guldara [1]:** *Three hours minimum*

Kabul - Guldara: 22 km; 14 mi; 1 hr.

Kabul - Bridge: 10 km; 6 mi; 10 min; unpaved

Bridge - stony track: 8 km; 5 mi; 30 min; unpaved

Track to stupa: 4 km; 3 mi, 30 min.

**Shewaki [22]:** *Two hours minimum*

Kabul - Shewaki: 15 km; 10 min; 40 min.

4 km; 2.5 mi. paved.

**Petrol:** Bala Hissar (Tour II, [9]).

[1] The trip to the **Valley of Guldara** (Valley of Flowers), small ravine at the northern end of the Logar Valley, combines a pleasant drive in the country with some exercise and an extremely interesting historic site dating from the 4th century A.D. The road is unpaved



for the most part but not difficult except for the last few kilometers fully described below. Cars such as the Land Rover, jeep or Volkswagen are recommended for this trip. Spring rains and summer flash floods can, however, make the road impassable. There is no shade whatsoever at the stupa but a light breeze almost always makes up for it.

[2] The road begins at the foot of Bala Hissar, Tour II, [9]. Proceed straightahead from the Minar -i- Nejat ( Salvation Column ) to the petrol station and continue straight ahead on the paved road, leaving the petrol on your right. Here you will find a very busy bazaar, a wood-collecting center, and the road often choked with lorries, horse drawn carriages (*gadi*), and an incredible number of swerving taxis.

[3] A graveyard on the right marks the entrance to the village of Beni Hissar (Nose of the Fortress), 4 km; 2.5 mi. from the petrol station. There is a large experimental farm, a poultry farm and an animal husbandry station at Beni Hissar. On leaving the town town you can usually see the *Minar-i-Chakari* very clearly, standing like a black needle on the crest of the Takht -i- Shah ( King's Throne ) mountain on your left. Sixty - five feet high, it dates from the Buddhist period during the early centuries A.D. and marks the pass through which the old caravan route from Kabul to Ghazni, and points east and south from Ghazni, passed. The Guldaia stupa sits just below it on the

southern slope of Takht-i-Shah, the Shewaki stupa just below it on the northern side. Some caravans still pass this way today and you may follow their trail if you are prepared for a three to four hour climb from Shewaki.

[4] About 3 km; 2 mi. further along, note a precipitous spur descending from the rocky height on your left. The spur ends in an eroded promontory above the Logar River at the point where the river enters the Kabul Plain. Reddish in color, or to others, yellowish, in contrast to the slate-grey rocks above it, it is easy to spot. The erosion is in fact the result of excavations carried out in 1935 by DAFA, and the site is known by the name of an adjacent village, Saka. Recent excavations at the monastery at Guldara have revealed several marked similarities leading the experts to the opinion that Saka was in fact one of a series of religious communities active throughout this area during the late Kushano-Sassanian period, just prior to the invasion of the Hephthalites in the 5th century.

[5] About a mile beyond Saka (10 km; 6 mi; 10 min. from Kabul) turn left and cross over the Logar River via a very old bridge newly rebuilt in brick and stone called Pul-i-Takhta Sangi Nawishta (Bridge of the Inscription). *Straight ahead on paved road to the Logar Valley which has many nice picnic spots.*

[6] In 1879, during the Second Anglo-Afghan War, members of General Roberts' army found the inscribed

stone from which the pass and bridge take their name on a mass of rock in the middle of the pass. They removed it and set it up in front of the General's quarters in Sherpur. The inscription was in Persian and recorded the opening of this road during the reign of the Moghul Emperor Shah Jahan in the 17th century.

[7] General Roberts launched his first attack on Kabul from this area. A considerable body of Afghan tribesmen crowned the crest of the ridge above the Sangi Nawishta Pass. Above them many coloured standards—red, white, dark blue, green, yellow—each a proud symbol of a tribe or village, waved as evidence of a united resistance. Heavy fighting took place before passage through the gorge was won. The next day General Roberts moved his camp to Beni Hissar where he remained for two days before moving into Kabul on the 9th of October, 1897.

[8] Passing over the bridge, turn right after a short climb up and over a rather precarious bridge over a little *jui* (small irrigation canal) and turn right past a few newly built houses. *Road to left to excavations of Saka.*

[9] The road now follows a rather large *jui* lined with mulberry trees and on the other side stands of poplars set off the fields of wheat and corn. Only one other trail meets this road. Keep right.

[10] Fifteen minutes after crossing the bridge (5 km; 3 mi.) the road rises over a pretty little pass to enter the



Musae Valley of the Logar, a particularly charming valley. Ten minutes after the pass (3 km.) you come to the village of Said Khel where you again bear to the right. A second village, Mian Khel, lies just beyond. Before entering Mian Khel take a well-defined track to the left, between a *qala* (high-walled residence) and a low cemetery mound. Incidentally, if you are interested in village architecture, Mian Khel has some impressive examples.

[11] The first part of this track is fairly easy but as you head for a grove of trees sheltering the tiny village of Guldara it becomes progressively worse. Ignore all tracks coming in from the left; head for the village. Sharp stones fill the track and at times it is necessary to drop down into a stream bed. A Land Rover or a Volkswagen should, however, be able to make it to the village, about 2 km; 1 mi. from Mian Khel, without too much difficulty.

[12] After Guldara you have to pick your own way through the very stony stream bed. How far you go by car depends on the car and your own judgment. The stupa, high on a hill at the end of the valley, soon comes into view, however, and like a beacon it lures you on. Generally speaking, keep to the right except at one point where you veer left to come out of the stream bed for a moment, and again to the left when you come face to face with a stone wall with several cairns perched on top of it. On bearing left at this wall, hug the low

hill on your right as much as possible. After a few trying moments the road improves a little and you are soon at the base of the stupa. At any time, however, you may leave the car and continue on foot. It is not an unpleasant walk.

[13] The beginning of the very steep path up to the stupa is still easy to see. It swings slightly left and then heads straight for the stupa. While resting a moment on arrival, take time to admire the beautiful view of the Musae Valley. Buddhists, ancient and modern, favour high secluded sites with inspirational views and Guldara's situation is classic. Seen in the late afternoon just before twilight, the entire valley takes on an ethereal quality of great peace.

[14] The stupa, standing on a square platform, is composed of a square base surmounted by two cylindrical drums topped with a dome. The square base of the Guldara stupa is exceptional in Afghanistan where most of the stupas, such as the one at Tope Darra in the Koh Daman and at Shewaki on the other side of this mountain, consist of one elongated cylindrical drum. The decoration at Guldara is also much more ornate. Here the base is decorated with false corinthian columns flanking, on three sides, a central niche, and on the south-west side, a staircase leading to the top of the base. The statues which once occupied the niches have completely disappeared. The decoration of the first drum is similar to that of the base but the second

drum is more elaborately embellished with a false arcade of alternating semicircular and trapizoidal arches. The motif between the arches represents the umbrella mast with which stupas are generally crowned.

[15] The walls present a fine example of Kushan workmanship known as “diaper masonry,” consisting of thin neatly placed layers of schist interspersed with large blocks of stone. The construction of the capitals is also especially interesting and most effective in its simplicity. It must be remembered, however, that the stupa was originally pastered and painted ochreyellow with red designs.

[16] As with all stupas, the core is a solid mass of rough stone and mud. Somewhere between one-half and three-quarters of the way up, however, a small chamber was constructed to receive the reliquary and treasure. Such a chamber may be seen in the Shewaki stupa. Knowing this, early 19th century western visitors to Afghanistan cut deep gashes into each stupa with the result that one now very rarely finds a stupa completely intact. Charles Masson opened this stupa and recovered gold Kushan coins and several other gold ornaments which may have been buttons. Those interested in a more detailed discussion about stupas, the relics they contained, their function in Buddhist ritual and the vitality of their ceremony may consult: *The Valley of Bamiyan* and *An Historical Guide to Afghanistan*, Chapter II, both available at the Afghan



Tourist Organization, Kabul.

[17] Because of the exceptional quality of its architecture, this stupa was restored by experts from the Kabul Museum with assistance from Unesco.

[18] The small stupa on the side of the hill is a replica of the main stupa on the summit.

[19] The main stupa stands directly opposite the entrance to the monastery excavated by M. Le Berre and M. Fussman of DAFA in 1963/4. The report on the Guldara Monastery is now being prepared for publication by DAFA who were kind enough to permit us to publish some pictures so that visitors may more easily visualize the original decor. To the left of the doorway to the monastery, outside it facing the stupa, there was a group of very tall standing figures. The excavators found only two large feet in situ to indicate their existence and even these have since disappeared. At the end of the entrance passage, across the corridor, a seated Buddha welcomed pilgrim and weary traveler. The excavators also found evidence that the Buddha figure sat crosslegged in a niche on a throne flanked by a standing Bodhisattva (Buddha-to-be) on the Buddha's right and an elephant on his left. Red drapery hanging in graceful folds covered the Buddha's knees and beneath the throne there were two lion masks and a molded reptile, probably a lizard. Both man and nature have succeeded in completely obliterating all trace of this scene. Only the

the empty niche remains.

[20] From this point a central corridor, plastered and painted red below and white above, encircles the entire establishment. Off this corridor there are numerous small, nearly identical rooms with domed ceilings, some with trumpet-like squinches of the type so prominent at Bamiyan, and one small niche for a lamp or shrine figure. There is also evidence of a decorated molding made of thick mud covered with plaster encircling the walls. From the corridor a stairway led to the second story, now gone. From the vantage point of this upper story, however, (reached over a pile of fill to left of entrance), one can see that the central part of the monastery was composed of a square open courtyard and that the four outer corners were built in the form of round towers to give the monastery the air of a fortress. This is a typical form of construction found at Tepe Maranjan and numerous other sites throughout the Kabul area.

[21] From the top of the monastery, with your back to the stupa, you can easily follow the route of the ancient road which wound through a series of small valleys to your right, to the top of Takht-i-Shah where the Minar-i-Chakari marks the pass. This route is still followed by some nomad caravans today.

[22] To visit the **Shewaki stupa** from Kabul, proceed to Beni Hissar (above, 3). In the middle of the village cross a small bridge on left. At Shewaki Village

2 kilometers beyond, pass over another bridge and turn left. Turn right 5 kilometers beyond on the *outskirts* of the village called Nou Burja (Nine Towers). At next fork, 1 kilometer beyond, take a left and proceed toward stupa. The next 3 kilometers to the stupa, which you can see clearly from this point, are difficult and how far you continue by car depends on your courage and your car. There are many unpredictable draws, washes and irrigation *juis*. You may picnic in a mulberry grove below the stupa.

## G, GHAZNI

One day trip to Ghazni and return.

Kabul-Ghazni: 136 km; 38 mi; 1  $\frac{1}{2}$  hrs.

Petrol: Koti Sangi

Ghazni

Hotel: Hotel Ghazni; small hotels in town.

Refreshments: Farokhi Restorant. Ghazni is famous for *kabab* and *karoyi kabab*.

Tolls: 60 afs. round trip.

[1] This trip to Ghazni, capital of Ghazni Province, takes you through some spectacular scenery to the site of the Ghaznavid Empire (10th - 12th centuries A.D.) The town itself is in the throes of a massive modernization programme but the bazaars are still interesting nevertheless.

[2] The road to Ghazni which lies on the Kabul-



Qandahar highway begins at Koti Sangi . At fork, 6 km; 4 mi. beyond, take road to left. *Right to Paghman, above section A*

[3] Though there are few records describing Ghazni before the Islamic period, and even these are contradictory. it seems possible that the Achaeminid armies of Cyrus and Darius in the 6th century B.C. and that of Alexander the Great in the 4th century B. C passed through this area. The rugged terrain of the Hazarajat lying between the major cities of Herat and Kabul is so inhospitable that even today the road connecting these two strategic centers swings far to the south to pass through Qandahar and crosses the mountains via the Ghazni Pass.

[4] Scholars differ in their interpretation of the Greek texts concerning the division of the lands south of the Hindu Kush between the Seleucids and the Maurya after the death of Alexander the Great. Some say the whole area was given into the hands of the Indian dynasty whereas others maintain that the references concern only a narrow strip west of the Indus River. Whichever may be correct, it is most probable that the area of Ghazni remained in a semi-independent state receiving political and cultural stimuli from both the east and the west, especially during the important time of the Maurya king Asoka (269-232 B. C.).

[5] The Ghazni area became a part of the Kushan Empire until Kushan weakness favoured the emergence

of petty states throughout Afghanistan. One such, known as Zabulistan, included the area of Ghazni where local rulers continued to rule, albeit as vassals, even after the coming of the Hephthalites. Two sovereigns of Zabulistan, reigning during the period from c. 490-544 A. D. are said to have conquered parts of India which is the first known instance of the use of the area as a spring-board for the invasion of the eastern plains, a role which was to assume such great importance in later centuries under the Ghaznavids. The very large quantities of Hephthalite pottery found by Italian archaeologists in the area of Ghazni indicates that an important settlement, if not the capital, of Zabulistan existed at the site of the present city of Ghazni.

[6] Later, in the middle of the 7th century, the Chinese pilgrim Hsuen-tsung speaks of visiting at Ho-hsi-na whose identification with an ancient city at Ghazni is accepted by some scholars. He tells us that "Although (the people) worship a hundred spirits, yet they also greatly reverence the three precious ones (Buddhism). There are several hundred monasteries, with 1000 or so priests. There are some ten stupas built by Asoka-rajā." ISMED, the Italian Archaeological Mission have brought to light the remains of a stupa which is considered to be the most important Buddhist monument in Afghanistan after the statues of Bamiyan. It is situated on the summit of a hill known as Tapa-i-Sardar to the south of the minarets,

[7] Though the excavations at Tapa-i-Sardar are not yet open to the public because of the delicate nature of the decorative art, a short description of the finds will enable the visitor to imagine the magnitude of the complex. The base alone is 22 meters square. Only the first and second storeys of the huge central core survives but there is evidence that a broad flight of stairs, interrupted at specific intervals to allow the faithful to perform the rite of circumambulation, ascended the western face. This stupa is, actually, built on the remains of a smaller stupa which was enlarged on several occasions down through the 7th and 8th centuries A.D., during the last phase of Buddhism in Afghanistan.

[8] Exploratory excavations by ISMEO (Istituto Italiano per il Medio ed Estremo Oriente) began in 1959 and since 1967 the Italian archaeologists have conducted regular seasons at Tapa-i-Sardar which continue under the direction of Maurizio Taddei. The excavations show that the central stupa was surrounded by minor monuments, a common practice in the Afghan area. There is a line of small decorated stupas on the east, for instance, most of which are in amazingly good condition considering the fact that they were constructed of unbaked clay, that there is evidence of an extremely destructive fire, and that tons of rubble from the toppled superstructure of the main stupa at one time descended upon them. The decoration shows stairways similar to that on the main stupa, molded



Buddhas standing in niches and many other motifs. Great skill was required in the delicate task of recovering this detail and the results can but inspire us with profoundest admiration. There were shrines around the central stupa as well. One on the southern side contained a large seated Buddha but only the feet and leg up to the knees remain.

[9] As the excavations continue, the significance of Tapa-i-Sardar increases. As more and more of the decorative art is uncovered much more can be said about the last phase of Buddhism in Afghanistan and the earlier material also adds immeasurably to an understanding of the development of an art style in the Afghan area. The recent material may indeed lead to an entirely new interpretation of the chronology of the development of the Afghan style. The 1970 season brought to light some wall paintings of exceptional importance. They evidence certain affinities with the art of Central Asia and are, therefore, another exciting contribution from Tapa-i-Sardar.

[10] During the 7th-9th centuries A. D. the Hindu Shahi kings ruling from Kabul extended their hold over the Ghazni area and they too built temples on Tapa-i-Sardar. Several very interesting Hindu statues have been found over the past few years.

[11] Tapa-i-Sardar therefore proves that there was a wealthy city at this spot prior to the arrival of Islam, but actual reference to a city by the name of Ghazni

first appear in written sources in connection with a battle fought in 683 A.D. between the citizens of Ghazni against the Arab armies. As with the case of Kabul, however, the early occupations by the Arabs were precarious and the city and its citizens were renowned for their resistance to the new religion. The Saffarid, Yakub ibn Layth, burned and razed the city in 869 because of its stubborn resistance and it is perhaps evidence of this very attack that we see in the burned and crumpled stupas described above. This lesson of power delivered, the city was promptly rebuilt by the conqueror's brother for its position was politically and economically strategic and 10th century geographers describe it as a rich commercial town serving as an emporium for trade with India.

[12] With the coming of the Turkish slave general Alptigin, in January 963, we witness the emergence of this city as the brilliant capital of an empire which bears its name. Under the Ghaznavids all of Afghanistan and large parts of Persia and India were ruled from this city in the mountains.

[13] Under the most illustrious of the Ghaznavids, Sultan Mahmud (r. 998-1030), Islam was taken into India from Ghazni. From India the armies returned laden with rich booty which was used to build a city of great magnificence, the home of poets, artists, historians and philosophers. According to contemporary historians, however, the sumptuous palaces of

the Sultan were nothing as compared to the mosque Sultan Mahmud built to commemorate his capture of the holy Hindu temple of Somnath. Known as the Arusu'l-Falk (Bride of Heaven), it was built of aromatic woods brought from India, of marble "smoother than a young girl's hand" and its decoration "of colours that bring to mind those of a garden in springtime" glistened with gold hammered from Hindu idols. The *mihrab* was fashioned of gold inlaid with lapis lazuli and there were halls so large that four thousand richly garbed guardsmen could gather in them at one time. Many of these halls were decorated with intricately and elaborately carved alabaster skirtings.

[14] Only legend marks the site of this fabulous building on the spot of a modern mosque near the city. **Sultan Mahmud's Mausoleum**, however, is situated in a garden suburb known today as Rauza about 2 kilometers beyond the minarets. This was the site of the Bagh-i-Firuzi or Emerald Garden, a favorite of the Sultan's which he personally chose as his last resting place. The modern shrine is modest but here and there water still gushes forth from the mouths of lions and rams carved in marble for the same purpose so many centuries ago.

[15] Succeeding sultans such as Ibrahim, Mas'ud III, and Bahram Shah, continued to enrich the city but political upheavals beat upon the empire hurrying the city to its final destruction; in 1151 the Ghorid



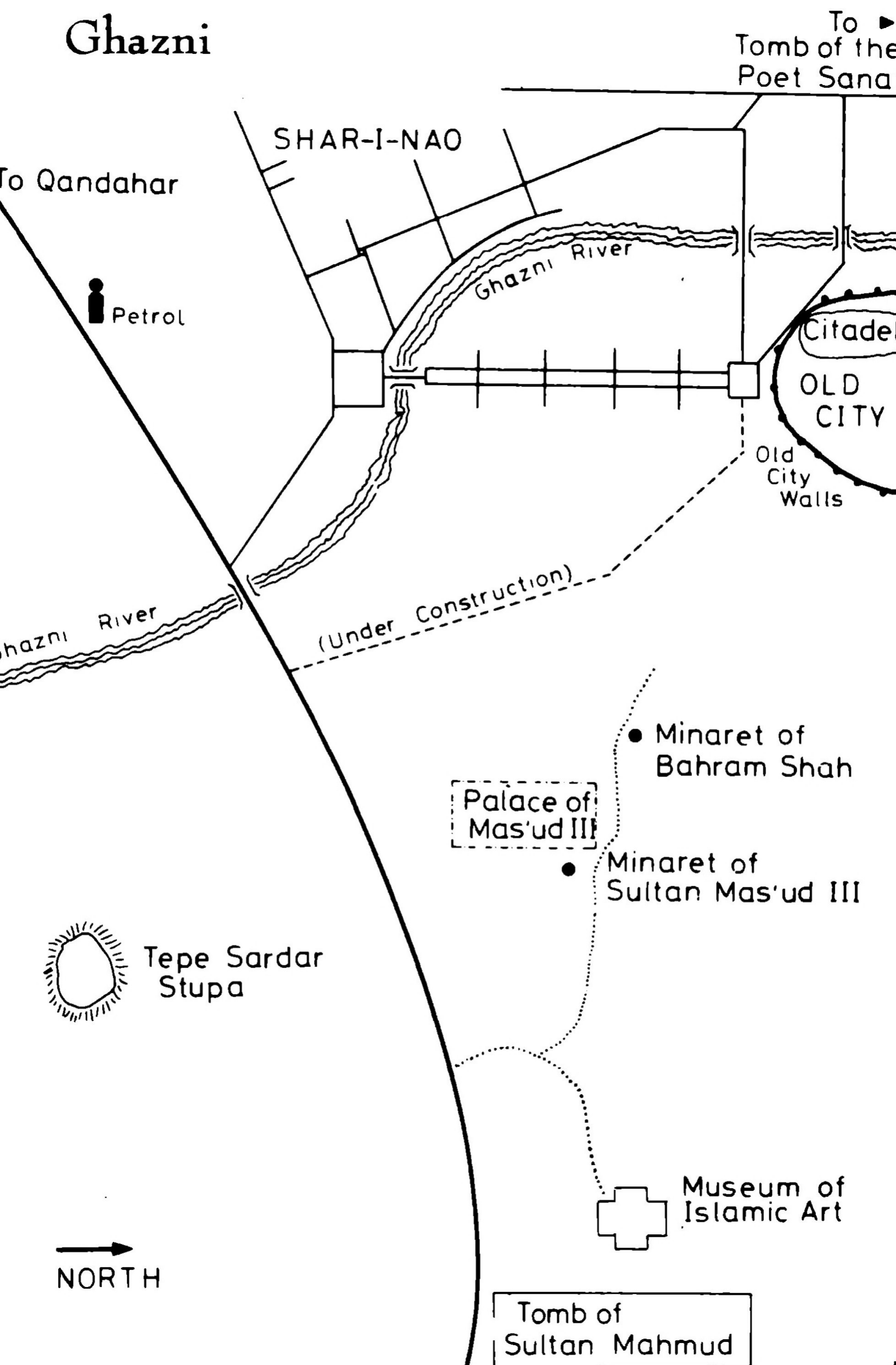
king Alauddin earned the name of Jahan Soz (Earth-burner) when he burned the city to the ground and Genghis Khan's attack in 1221 was so disastrous that 100 years later Ghazni was described by the traveller Ibn Battuta as a small village surrounded by a heap of ruins.

[16] Because of these disasters there is little to be seen at Ghazni today but two Minarets, now only a portion of their original height, standing by the roadside as proud and beautiful markers of the ancient city. They date from the time of Mas'ud III (r. 1099-1114) and Bahram Shah (r. 1118-1152) and were first brought to the attention of the western world when they were described by the British who passed this way in the 19th century. Their beauty and amazing workmanship has assured them of honored mention in all works on Islamic art ever since. The minaret built by Sultan Mas'ud III is the more elaborate.

[17] Close by the minarets, in the midst of a maze of mounds and tumuli, there stands a modern shrine or *ziarat* dedicated to a holy man said to have been born from his mother's throat. During the exploratory visit made by the Italian archaeologists in 1956 they found the *ziarat* to be built of ancient brick from the ruins and adorned with fragments of marble, including one stone in the niche of the shrine inscribed with the name of Mas'ud III.

[18] Thus encouraged they began excavations in

# Ghazni







1957 and thanks to their efforts one may now wander through the **Palace of Sultan Mas'ud III**. The presumption that this was his palace is based on the finding of inscriptions bearing his name but there is a possibility that the palace was originally built by his father Sultan Ibrahim (r. 1059-1099), a man known for his extensive building activities. If this is the case, the Mas'ud inscriptions would refer to certain alterations or additions effected by the son.

[19] At the excavation site (*No photographs permitted*) the major feature to note is the large courtyard 42 x 20 meters in size, surrounded by a wide foot-path paved with marble quarried from the hills near by. On the walls on either side of the *ziarat* you may see the decorative marble skirting reminiscent of that described in Sultan Mahmud's Bride of Heaven mosque. This marble facade is worth close observation not only because of its very fine workmanship but also because the epigraphic strips in Cufic lettering present us with some of the most important examples of Islamic calligraphy. The inscription shows evidence of polychromatic treatment and the experts surmise that the inscription was in lapis lazuli blue, raised above a gilded background to resemble the beautiful illuminations of that period.

[20] The room adjoining the northern side of the *ziarat* was the palace mosque. Literary references tell us that the idol of Somnath was broken up and used in the pavement at the entrance to Sultan Mahmud's

great mosque. Interestingly, a marble statue of the Hindu god Brahma was found in the threshold of this palace mosque, its face worn smooth by the passage of many feet. This is certainly most graphic corroboration of the iconoclastic fervor of the Ghaznavid period.

[21] To the north of the excavations a hill rises 400 meters above the plain along the slopes of which you may see a series of bright green patches which are walled-in gardens. During Ghaznavid days the aristocracy built their villas and palaces here in similar fashion, rivaling one another in their attempts at magnificence. One of these villas has been excavated by the archaeologists and a store of ceramic ware known as luster ware, the first to be found in Afghanistan, was recovered. Some of the more beautiful examples from this find are now on exhibit in the Islamic Arts Room in the Kabul Museum, others are on view at the Museum of Islamic Arts in Ghazni (see below, 32). Two hundred meters to the east of the House of Lusters you may visit the **Tomb of Sebuktigin**, the father of Sultan Mahmud, which lies inside a little yellow pavilion with a peaked metal roof.

[22] Four hundred poets are said to have gathered at the Ghaznavid court. One of the more famous was **Sana'i** of Ghazni whose proper name was Abu'l-Majid Majdud b. Adam. He was the first of the great mystical writers, and he lived during the reign of Bahram Shah

(r. 1118-1152). In spite of his fame, however, little is known of his personal life which is the way a mystic would prefer it.

[23] His works were numerous but his *Hadiqa* is the best known today. A moral and ethical poem it consists of about eleven thousand verses divided into the following ten sections: In Praise of God; In Praise of the Prophet; Reason; Knowledge; Carelessness; The Heavens and the Zodiacal Signs; Philosophy; Love; The Poet's Own Circumstances; In Praise of Bahram Shah.

[24] One example of his poetry:

Mouths are needed ere, by earth and water fed, the  
cotton seed Can provide the martyr's shroud or clothe  
the fair in raiment fine;

Days are needed ere a handful of wool from back of  
sheep Can provide the ass's halter or the hermit's  
gabardine. Lives are needed ere by Nature's kindly  
fostering, the child Can become a famous poet or a  
scholar ripe and fine. (trans. E.G. Browne)

[25] The **Mausoleum of Sana'i** sits at the top of a large garden on the old road from Kabul, on the opposite of the city from the minarets and Sultan Mahmud's Mausoleum. *On the way to the mausoleum at the old bridge, you pass another very holy shrine, the Ziarat-i-Mui Muburak, the Shrine of the Hair of the Prophet.* No doubt Sanai's tomb was simple like so many others in the the old cemetery surrounding the mausoleum where



there are many interesting marble tombstones carved in the style of the Ghaznavid and succeeding periods. The present building which replaced a simple mud structure, is a large octagonal, domed structure flanked by two mosques. The mosque to the north is an enclosed room used in the winter, the one on the south is open for use during the summer. Outside the winter mosque there is an entrance to a small subterranean *chihlakhana* (House of Forty Days) where one may go to meditate for a prescribed period of forty days.

[26] Gracing the top of the dome and long poles above numerous graves in the vicinity you will notice an interesting assortment of religious symbols fashioned from silver such as the Crescent, the Hand of Fatima (Fatima, the Prophet's daughter, a symbol of protection), *Allah* in Arabic calligraphy, and *La illah illallah* (There is no god but God).

[27] Inside the shrine, the poet's sarcophagus and four additional sarcophagi are covered with bright mantles of cotton and velvet, contrasting effectively with the stark whiteness of the walls. The four buried here with the poet are said to have been four of Sana'i's closest disciples, the one at the foot of the poet's tomb being Iskander (Alexander), King of Rome (Rum or Eastern Rome) who left his kingdom to study before Sana'i. Rum was the name given by their contemporaries to the Turkic Seljuks after they established themselves by a victory over the Byzantines in 1017.

[28] The poet's tomb has two stones, the one lying perpendicular to the base of an inscription by Ibrahim Khalil being the oldest. Behind the tomb (north) there is a simple, spare prayer room with a Koran stand. Most who come to pray here, including many nomads with their families, pray in the main room, however.

[29] The ceiling over the tomb is painted in bright colors touched with gold. This painting consists of a large gold rectangle centered with a blue star on which *Allah Muhammad* is written in gold. In the right angles of the large rectangle the artist has deftly written *ya Muhammad* so that one may read it from either direction. right or left, the central *d* holding a star and crescent serving for both.

[30] Outside the rectangle the *kalima* or Declaration of Faith, *La illah illallah Muhamad Rasool Allah*, There is no God but Allah, and Muhammad is His Prophet, appears on the north and south sides. On either side of the *kalima* four red circles bear the names of the first four Caliphs of Islam together with their title *Amir-al-Muminin* (Commander of the Believers), written in gold: NE, Abu Bakr (632-634 A.D.); NW, Omar (634-644 A.D.); SE, Othman (644-656 A.D.); SW, Ali (656-661 A.D.). On the east and west, *ya Muhammad* again appears, flanked by blue circles bearing the names of the four archangels: NE, Mikail, (Michael), The Protector; NW, Israfil, who will blow the trumpet to announce the Last Judgment; SE, Gabriel, The Mes-

senger who transmitted the revelation of the Koran; SW, Izrail, the Angel of Death. Four large teardrops with *Blessings Be Upon Muhammad* written in very elaborate calligraphy hang from each corner of the large rectangle. Two hundred meters to the east of the House of Lusters you may visit the **Tomb of Subuktagin**, the father of Sultan Mahmud.

[31] This is all that remains of the glories of the Ghaznavids. The 15th century witnessed a gradual recovery of the south from the devastation wrought by the Mongols and during the Timurid period the city experienced a cultural renaissance. By the time the Moghul Emperor Babur appears on the scene early in the 16th century we find a Timurid Governor ruling over a prosperous city. This governor was killed in battle while marching to defend his city against Babur and today we find the **Mausoleum of Sultan Abdur Razzak** standing close to Sultan Mahmud's Mausoleum. ISMEO began restoration work on this monument in 1961 and in 1966 it opened as the **Museum of Islamic Arts**. It is a very fine example of Timurid architecture. Here one may see the door-frame and screen bearing the name of Mas'ud III which led to the identification of the palace; marble slabs from the courtyard dado at the palace and other marble carvings from various sites in the Ghazni area; objects from the House of Luster; animal-shaped channel mouths from the gardens around Sultan Mahmud's tomb; a manuscript containing



the works of Sana'i; ceramic tiles, glass and fine bronzes.

[32] Ghazni remained within the Moghul Empire and later throughout the days of the founding of the modern state of Afghanistan it became a major strategic defense post for the capital at Kabul. The city figures prominently during both the Anglo-Afghan wars of the 19th century and its **Citadel** is described in detail by many authors on this period. Even today the walls are remarkably and impressively preserved on a high hill which completely dominates the valley.

## **H. HADDA**

*One day trip from Kabul to Hadda and return.*

Kabul-Hadda: 159 km; 100 mi; 2 hrs. 20 min.

One and a quarter hours for visit from Jalalabad.

Jalalabad-Hadda: 9 km; 6 mi; 20 min.

**Petrol:** Sarobi; Jalalabad

**Hotel:** Hotel Speen Ghar, Jalalabad

Sroobi Hotel, Sarobi

**Refreshments:** Hotel Speen Ghar, Jalalabad, full meals

Numerous restaurants on main street,  
Jalalabad.

*Kabab* shops, Sarobi

**Tolls:** 40 afs round trip from Kabul.

**Fees:** 10 afs entrance to site museum, Hadda, per person.

50 afs per camera at site museum, Hadda.

[1] This trip has been included so that those really interested in Afghanistan's historical sites will realize that Hadda, one of the most important Buddhist sites in the country, is now accessible even to a hurried visitor, and also, to alert those travelling to the border at Torkham that this can be a very rewarding short detour.

[2] The road to Jalalabad begins at the clock tower in front of the Mahmud Khan Bridge (*Tour II*, [51] *Map II*). It passes through the **Tangi Gharu** (see above section E) and the pretty little town of **Sarobi** on the banks of a reservoir. Nearing Jalalabad, it passes by the **Darunta Reservoir** as well.

[3] In **Jalalabad** proceed directly south from traffic circle on main street to outskirts of Danda Cheshma housing development, 4.5 km; 3 mi;

Turn left along north bank of canal for 4.5 km; 3 mi;

Turn right over small bridge over canal opposite village of Hadda which will be seen on small hill to right;

Double back on south side of canal and proceed directly to site museum which sits under a roof of modern design difficult to miss.

[4] From the 2nd to the 7th centuries A.D., the Jalalabad area was one of the most sacred spots in the Buddhist world. Southwest of the city there were as many as a thousand stupas in the land called Hilo by Chinese chroniclers, modern Hadda. So it is that this entire area is littered with mounds, once Buddhist monasteries and stupas. More than 500 of these were

investigated or excavated by French archaeologists from DAFA (Delegation Archæologique Française en Afghanistan) from 1923-1928. The Japanese Archaeological Mission excavated at Hadda in 1965. The Kabul Museum has an extremely rich collection, therefore, of the remarkable art finds from these excavations. Visitors are urged to visit the Hadda Room in the Kabul Museum before going to Hadda.

[5] The Afghan Institute of Archaeology began to excavate a mound at Hadda called **Tapa-i-Shotor** (The Camel's Mound) in 1965 under the direction of Dr. Shahibye Mustamandi. Where possible, their findings have been left in situ affording the visitor a unique opportunity to visualize the complex as it was centuries ago.

[6] The Tapa-i-Shotor mound, a large monastery-stupa active from about the 2nd to the 4th centuries A.D., consists of a large central stupa, surrounding votive stupas (one of which has been completely restored), side niches with monumental standing Buddhas, and statue-lined entranceways.

[7] The iconography at Tapa-i-Shotor is richly varied, the workmanship delicate and of high quality. Of particular interest are: the superbly realistic modeling of the Buddha's two **disciples** in a niche in the entrance passageway; the very "Grecian" figure of a small **child** offering a bowl to the Buddha, on a stupa near the restored stupa; the **lion** licking the feet of the Buddha,



on the restored stupa, serene **family trios** dressed in Central Asian garb on the stupas on the south side; the **seated Buddhas** on the small stupas along the west side.

[8] A particularly unique scene was revealed in a niche in the southwest corner. It is referred to as the **Fish Porch** because of the numbers of fish and other marine figures sculptured in stucco on the floor. The watery theme is carried on up the walls with a realistic depiction of waves in which water plants blossom. Even the seated figures of Bodhisattvas (Buddhas-to-be) are clearly depicted as sitting in the water; below the waist their garments cling to them wetly, while above the waterline they appear quite dry. A frightening creature with a fish-tail, bushy hair, pointed elfin ears, a grinning smile filled with buck teeth, and four eyes (or is it one pair reflected in the water?), floats menacingly on the back wall. The presence of snakes in connection with one of the figures suggests that the scene represents the meeting of the Buddha with the God of the Nagas (Snakes), at the time of his conversion to Buddhism.

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## A

Afghan Dishes 163  
Afghan Films 149  
Afghan Tourist Organization 72  
Airport 143  
Archaeological Sites  
    Begram (Kapisa) 191  
    Ghazni 211  
    Guldara 206  
    Hadda 225  
    Khair Khana 178  
    Minar-i-Chakari 203  
    Saka 204  
    Shewaki 210  
    Tapa-i-Iskander 179  
    Tapa-i-Khazana 74  
    Tapa-i-Marenjan 117  
    Tapa Salaam 140  
    Tapa-i-Sardar, Ghazni 213  
    Tapa-i-Shotor, Hadda 227  
    Tope Darra 182  
Arg, Royal Palace 143  
Art Gallery 128

## B

Babur's Gardens 76  
Bagh-i-Bala 131  
Bala Hissar 99  
Bank-i-Milli 66  
Barfdan 157  
Bazaars 165  
Begram (Kapisa) 191  
Bemaru Heights 148  
Beni Hissar 203  
Bobo Jan's 70  
Bridges  
    Arten 81  
    Guzargah 76  
    Khishti 94  
    Qalah Mahmud Khan 119  
    Shahi 91  
Burj-i-Abdullah 191  
Burj-i-Shahrara 126

## C

Cantonment, 1842-149  
Cantonment, 1878-147  
Cartographic Institute 143

Chahr Chatta 94  
Chahrdeh 84  
Chaman-i-Houzuri 116  
Chaman-i-Wazirabad 134  
Chandawal 89  
Charikar 183  
Child Care Center 124  
Christian Cemetery 127  
Cinemas  
    Ariana 66  
    Behzad 152  
    Park 125  
    Zaineb 125  
Citadel, Ghazni 225  
    Kabul 130

## D

Darra 173  
Darulaman 84  
Deh Afghanan 71  
Deh Mezang 83  
Dilkusha Palace 145

## G

Gardens  
    Babur 76  
    Chilsitoun 80  
    Gulbagh 88

Gulbahar 187  
Istalif 180  
Ladies' 129  
Paghman 173,175  
Rishkor 88  
Ghazni 211  
Golf Course 177  
Gulbagh 88  
Gulbahar 187  
Gulbara 202  
Gulghundai 183

## H

Halda 225  
Hospitals  
    Aliabad 139  
    Aviccenna 89  
    Children's 149  
    Masturat, Women's 89  
    Wazir Akbar Khan 149

## Hotels

Ariana 145  
Bahar, Paghman 170  
Ghazni, Ghazni 211  
Intercontinental 131  
Istalif 180  
Khinjan 185  
Park 72



**Plaza 72**

**Spin Ghar, Jalalabad 225**

**Spinzar 72**

**Sroobi, Sarobi 225**

## **I**

**Istalif 179**

**Istiklal Park 121**

## **J**

**Jabal Seraj 184**

**Jahangir's Throne 75**

**Jangalak 80**

**Jeshan Grounds(Chaman) 116**

## **K**

**Kapisa (Begram) 191**

**Kargha Lake 176**

**Karizamir 179**

**Khair Khana Pass 178**

**Khinjan 185**

**Koh Daman 178**

**Kolola Pushta 126**

## **L**

**Ladies' Garden 129**

**Lataband Pass 200**

**Library, Public 70**

**Manuscripts 71**

**Logar 204**

## **M**

**Macroroyan 117**

**Mahipar Gorge 198**

**Mausoleums and Tombs**

**Amir Abdur Rahman 67**

**Babur76**

**Jamaluddin Afghani 138**

**Nadir Shah, King 118**

**Salauddin Seljooqi 108**

**Sana'i 221**

**Seh Oghor 113**

**Sultan Mahmud 217**

**Sher Surkh 113**

**Stein, Sir Aurel 127**

**Subuktagin 220**

**Sultan Abdur Razzak 224**

**Timur Shah 91**

**Minarets, Ghazni 218**

**Minar-i-Chakari 203**

**Ministries (see map)**

**Air Authority 149**

**Agriculture 139**

**Commerce 84**

**Defense 121**

**Education 71**

Finance 66  
Foreign Affairs 123  
Information and Culture 72  
Justice 123  
Mines and Industries 121,143  
Prime Ministry 123

## Monuments

Abdul Wakil Khan 83  
Elm-wa-Jahil 81  
Istiklal 121  
Maiwand 97  
Nejat 98  
Pushtunistan 65  
Victory Arch, Paghman 169

## Mosques

Id Gah 119  
Paghman 171  
Pul-i-Khishti 94  
Shah-do-Shamshira 72  
Shah Jahan 77  
Sherpur 125

## Municipality 71

Museums, Ghazhi 224  
Kabul 85

## N

Nadir Shah Mina 117  
National Assembly 84

Noon Gun 80

## P

Paghman 169  
Palace, Ghazni 219  
Kabul 143  
Panjsher 190  
Pashto Academy 124  
Parwan, Karte 129

## Picnic Spots

Darra 173  
Gulbagh 88  
Gulbahar 187  
Istalif 180  
Logar 204  
Paghman 169  
Rishkor 88  
Salang 181

Pul-i-Chariki 197  
Polytechnic Institute 135  
Post Office, central 91  
Pushtunistan Square 65

## R

Radio Afghanistan 149  
Red Tower 126  
Restaurants and Cafes 159  
Rishkor 88

**Royal Palace (Arg) 143**

## **S**

**Saka 204**

**Salaam Khana 145**

**Salang Highway 72**

**Salang Pass 184**

**Sarobi 201,226**

**Schools**

**Aeisha Durrani 91**

**AIT 141**

**Ghazi 141**

**Habibiya 84**

**Lycee Istiklal 66**

**Lycee Mahmud Beg Tarzi 87**

**Naderia Lycee 130**

**Nejat 145**

**Sharara 129**

**Sher Darwaza 76 ,**

**Shahr-i-Nau 125**

**Sherpur 125,146**

**Shewaki 210**

**Shohada-i-Salehin 108**

**Shopping 165**

**Shrines, see Ziarats**

**Siah Sang 199**

**Stadium, Ghazi 117**

**Stupas, Buddhist**

**Guldara 207**

**Hadda 227**

**Shewaki 210**

**Tapa-i-Iskander 179**

**Tapa-i-Sardar 213**

**Tope Darra 182**

## **T**

**Takht-i-Shah 112**

**Tangi Gharu 197**

**Tapa, Paghman 175**

**Tapa-i-Iskander 179**

**Tapa-i-Maranjan 108**

**Tapa-i-Sardar 213**

**Tapr-i-Shotor 227**

**Tapa-i-Taj Beg 87**

**Tclegraph Office 66**

**Tope Darra 182**

**Theatres**

**Kabul Nandari 117**

**Kawkab 128**

**Traffic Office 83**

## **U**

**University, Kabul 137**

## **W**

**Walls, ancient 99**



**Wazir Akbar Khan Mina 146**  
**Women's Institute 124**

## **Y**

**Yakdan 157**

## **Z**

**Zarnegar Park 67**

**Ziarats**

**Ashukhan-o-Arefan 152**

**Bibi Mahru 148**

**Cheshme Khizr (Khedr) 114**

**Cheshme Roshnayi 154**

**Jan Baz 109**

**Khwaja Safa 155**

**Mosafer 169**

**Panjesha 110**

**Pir-i-Akram Khan 157**

**Pir-i-Baland 133**

**Sakhi 139**

**Shah-do Shamshira 72**

**Shah-o-Aros 169**

**Shah Shahced 198**

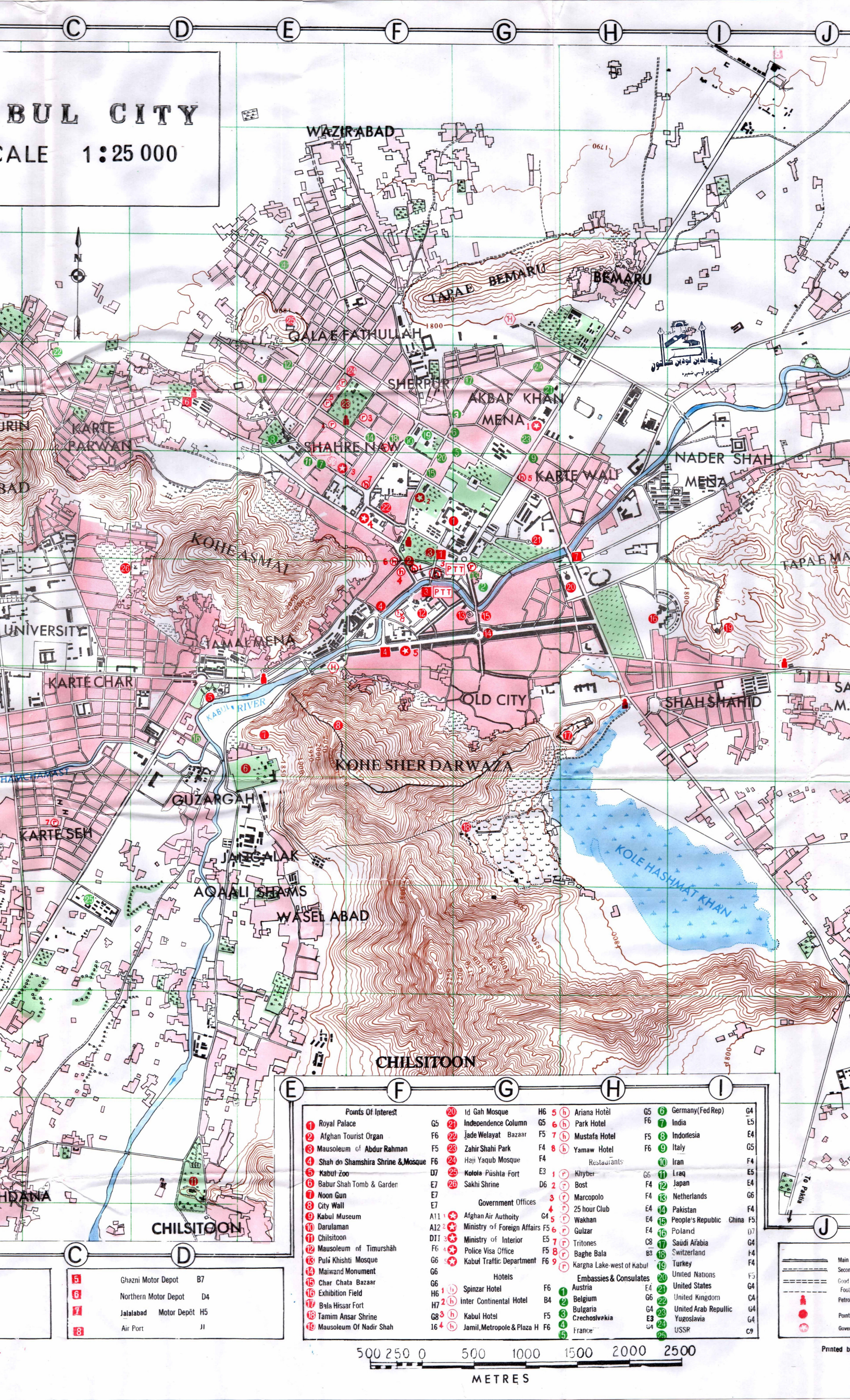
**Tamim-i-Ansari 113**

**Zoo 82**



# KABUL CITY

SCALE 1:25 000



- Points Of Interest**
- 1 Royal Palace
  - 2 Afghan Tourist Organ
  - 3 Mausoleum of Abdur Rahman
  - 4 Shah do Shamshira Shrine & Mosque
  - 5 Kabul Zoo
  - 6 Babur Shah Tomb & Garden
  - 7 Noon Gun
  - 8 City Wall
  - 9 Kabul Museum
  - 10 Darulaman
  - 11 Chilsitoon
  - 12 Mausoleum of Timurshah
  - 13 Pulé Khishti Mosque
  - 14 Maiwand Monument
  - 15 Char Chata Bazaar
  - 16 Exhibition Field
  - 17 Bala Hissar Fort
  - 18 Tamim Ansar Shrine
  - 19 Mausoleum Of Nadir Shah
  - 20 Id Gah Mosque
  - 21 Independence Column
  - 22 Jade Welayat Bazaar
  - 23 Zahir Shahi Park
  - 24 Haji Yaqub Mosque
  - 25 Kotola Püshia Fort
  - 26 Sakhi Shrine

- Government Offices**
- A11 1 Afghan Air Authority
  - A12 2 Ministry of Foreign Affairs
  - D11 3 Ministry of Interior
  - F6 4 Police Visa Office
  - G6 5 Kabul Traffic Department
- Hotels**
- G6 1 Spinzar Hotel
  - H7 2 Inter Continental Hotel
  - G8 3 Kabul Hotel
  - 16 4 Jamil, Metropole & Plaza H
  - H6 5 Ariana Hotel
  - G5 6 Park Hotel
  - F5 7 Mustafa Hotel
  - F4 8 Yamaw Hotel

- Restaurants**
- E3 1 Khyber
  - D6 2 Bost
  - E7 3 Marcopolo
  - G4 4 25 hour Club
  - F5 5 Wakhan
  - F5 6 Gulzar
  - F5 7 Tritones
  - F5 8 Baghe Bala
  - F6 9 Kargha Lake-west of Kabul
- Embassies & Consulates**
- F6 1 Austria
  - B4 2 Belgium
  - G4 3 Bulgaria
  - F5 4 Czechoslovakia
  - F6 5 France
  - G5 6 Germany (Fed Rep)
  - F6 7 India
  - F5 8 Indonesia
  - F6 9 Italy
  - G6 10 Iran
  - F4 11 Iraq
  - F4 12 Japan
  - F4 13 Netherlands
  - E4 14 Pakistan
  - E4 15 People's Republic of China
  - E4 16 Poland
  - C8 17 Saudi Arabia
  - B3 18 Switzerland
  - F4 19 Turkey
  - F5 20 United Nations
  - E4 21 United States
  - E4 22 United Kingdom
  - G4 23 United Arab Republic
  - E3 24 Yugoslavia
  - G4 25 USSR

- Legend**
- Main Road
  - Second Road
  - Footpath
  - Petroleum
  - Point of Interest
  - Governments

500 250 0 500 1000 1500 2000 2500

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